

E N G L A N D

, AND

AMERICA.

**A COMPARISON OF THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL
STATE OF BOTH NATIONS.**

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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P R E F A C E.

THE following pages are intended for publication in America as well as in England. They have been written with two objects in particular : first, to lay before Americans a sketch of the political condition of England, and before the English an explanation of some peculiarities in the social state of America ; secondly, to point at the means of removing those causes which are productive of great evils to both countries.

For the satisfactory performance of such a Work, powers are required which the author does not possess ; command of language, a style calculated to engage the reader, and a name which should give to every statement or suggestion the weight

of authority. But, on the other hand, he has had peculiar motives for examining the condition of America, and is so far partly qualified to treat upon that subject; he believes also that he is enabled to make Americans comprehend the state of England, which hitherto has been described to them only by Englishmen writing, not for America, but for England. The English and Americans know very little of each other's affairs. Now, the present writer has looked at America with English eyes, and at England with American eyes. It was a consciousness of this advantage, that prompted him to undertake the task of describing to each nation the chief social peculiarities of the other.

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Another advantage which the writer fancies that he possesses over many Englishmen and Americans who might have written on these subjects, is the want of any patriotic prejudice in favour of either country—of any motive for concealing or perverting the truth. His opinions, he believes, have been formed and are stated without affection or fear. Plain-speaking must

nearly always be disagreeable to somebody; and in this case it will offend many, because large classes, both in England and America, are mentioned without any regard for their selfish interests, their mean passions, or even their honest prejudices.

The following Notes are not to be considered as so many discussions on distinct subjects; but each of them is more or less connected with all the others. In fact, they all relate to the social state and political economy of England and America.

What, it may be asked, has the political economy of England to do with that of America, or that of America with that of England? What relation can there be between the political prospects of the English, and the origin, progress and prospects of slavery in America? To such questions these Notes supply an answer. Comparison is the easiest way to truth. In many cases, the Americans and the English may have an equal interest in the same subject, though they may

have very different objects in view. Of this common interest with different objects, the subject of colonization is a good example. Admitting that the three elements of production are land, capital and labour; supposing that the chief social evils of England are owing to a deficiency of land in proportion to capital and labour, and those of America to an excess of land in proportion to capital and labour, (whatever great advantages she may owe to a sufficiency of land) in that case, the Americans and the English have a common interest in understanding the art of colonization, though the object of the Americans should be to have less, and that of the English to have more, of one of the elements of wealth. So, also, if it be for the interest of the English to buy cheap corn of the Americans, and of the Americans to buy cheap manufactured goods of the English, the two nations have a common interest in the repeal of the English corn laws and of the American tariff. In every subject treated of in these Notes, the Americans and the English have more or less a common interest.

The statements and arguments contained in these Notes might have been supported by reference to numerous authorities; but, though the writer wished, for his own sake, to adopt that course, still he was afraid that, by doing so, he might render his work too formal. To one book, however, he has referred pretty often; Mr. Stuart's *Three Years in North America*; a production, which may be termed a storehouse of facts concerning the United States. If Mr. Stuart had seen fit to develop the causes of the facts which he has collected, to give reasons for the chief social peculiarities of America, these Notes, or at least such of them as treat directly of the United States, would not have been published.

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NOTE I.

THE WEALTH OF ENGLAND.

First signs of wealth observed by a foreigner—proofs of wealth in London—in the country—superior enjoyments of the English—large proportion of the English who enjoy much wealth—immense capital invested—abundance of capital ready to be invested—overflow of capital—causes of the great wealth of England—combination of power—division of capital and labour a cause of poverty—effects of combination of productive power on the agriculture, manufactures and commerce, of England—some conclusions from the principle, that production depends on the degree in which men help each other—constant progress of wealth and civilization in England.

AN American citizen visits the continent of Europe, and on his way home passes some time in England. Here he finds the roads in every direction far better than any he has seen before, and he sees more of them on a given space than in France or America. The cross roads are kept in far better order than those of any other country. By the side of nearly all the great roads, he sees, for the first time, a well kept foot-path. In many

places, the foot-paths across fields are as dry, and smooth, and trim, as walks in pleasure gardens. All the carriages on the roads are stronger and lighter, more useful and sightly, than those to which he is accustomed ; and the vast number of those carriages strikes him with astonishment. The strength and beauty of the horses, the quality and neatness of their harness, and the very whips with which they are driven, excite his wonder. The uncommon speed with which he travels raises his spirits and inclines him to look favourably at every thing. He exclaims,—what magnificent crops ! what beautiful meadows ! what fine cattle and sheep ! what skill and care in the mixture of wood, arable and grass lands ! what noble trees ! what regularity and neatness in the fences ! even the ditches and gate-posts are admirable ! The mansions are palaces, the farm-houses mansions, the merest village of cottages has an air of peculiar comfort ; whilst the number of those mansions, farm-houses and villages, gives to the country the appearance of a scattered town. But then the towns : many of them are so extensive, the houses in them are so well built, the shops have such a display of rich goods, the streets are so well paved and contain so large a proportion of good houses ; these towns are so full of well-dressed people, that each of them might be taken for a city. Even the smallest towns appear like sections of a wealthy capital ;

and the number of towns, large and small, is so great that, together with the great number of good houses by the road side out of town, one seems to be travelling all day through one street. This, the foreigner imagines, must be the most populous road in England ; there must be something peculiar in this part of the country which attracts rich people. By no means. He is told that, so long as fourteen years ago, the length of the paved streets and turnpike roads of England and Wales was about twenty thousand miles ; and he soon learns that nearly all the great roads show marks of wealth like those which he has so much admired. He therefore supposes, that the wealth of the country must bear a very large proportion to that of the metropolis ; but on this point he is undeceived on reaching London. Here the crowd is so great, the objects which attract his attention are so many and so different, that, for a while, he is bewildered and incapable of arranging his thoughts so as to draw conclusions from what he sees. At length he begins to observe methodically and to compare his observations with those which he has made in other great cities. Until now he has conceived New York or Paris to be the place in which the greatest amount of wealth was enjoyed by a given number of people ; but he is now convinced that the inhabitants of London obtain a greater quantity of things necessary, useful or agreeable, to man, than

the inhabitants of any other city in the world. The quantity of flour and meat consumed, in proportion to people, he finds not much greater in London than in Paris, and even less than in New York, where the working classes live better than in London; so also the proportion of looking glasses he knows to be greater in Paris, and the proportion of rum drank to be greater in New York, than in London; but he cannot doubt that, on the whole, more good things are enjoyed in London, by a given number of people, than any where else out of England. It is not in his power, indeed, to compare the quantities or values of all necessary, useful or agreeable, things enjoyed in London, with the quantities or values of such things used in other great cities; but he is convinced of the superior wealth of London by the same mode of observation, which has satisfied him that the people of New York drink more rum, and the people of Paris own more looking glasses, than the people of London. In London one meets with every thing the immediate produce of agriculture, such as meat, bread, sugar and tea, of the very finest quality. Of manufactured objects used in London, scarce one can be mentioned which is not brought to greater perfection than similar objects used in other capital cities, whilst the variety of such objects is yet more striking. The fittings and furniture of a third rate house in London are of a better quality than

those of a palace in France or Germany; the doors and windows answer their purpose better; the chairs are stronger, lighter and more convenient to sit upon; the tables, if not more useful, are far more beautiful; the glass is more transparent, the knives cut better, the fastenings of all sorts, the corkscrew and the toasting fork, are better suited to their purpose, and composed of superior materials. In every London house, excepting those of the poorest order, one finds many useful and agreeable objects which are either scarce or unknown in Paris, New York and Vienna. The inhabitants of London pay, it has been reckoned, about 50,000*l.* a year,—being the fourth of 200,000*l.* which the nation pays,—for what? for blacking advertisements—that is, for the facility of choosing between different kinds of blacking. The number of kinds of horses used in London, though very striking to a foreigner, is less remarkable than the fore-thought, pains and skill required for making each variety—the Lincolnshire dray horse, for example, the Cleveland coach horse, the high bred nag, the cob, and the trotting hackney—so obviously distinct from all the others. The variety of carriages, whether for business or pleasure, and the fitness of each sort for its peculiar purpose, whether that purpose be determined by the weather, by the fortune of him who owns the carriage, or the business of him who uses it,—are equally deserving of admiration.

At night, when other great cities are in darkness, all London is brilliantly illuminated ; nay, the the beautiful gas lights extend for some miles into the country in all directions. The pavements of London—but the list of examples might be continued through a volume. Still, the foreigner is less surprised at the quantity, variety and perfection, of useful and agreeable objects used in London, than at the great proportion of the people who enjoy in abundance the most perfect of those objects. That the houses of the high aristocracy should be large, fine and richly furnished, is nothing strange ; but the houses in many quarters which the aristocracy despise, are as large, fine and well furnished as those of the most aristocratic quarters. The best houses, for instance, in Bloomsbury, Finsbury and Lambeth, and in such villages or suburbs as Highgate, Hornsey, Tottenham, Hackney, Peckham and Clapham, though a lord would disdain to live in one of them, are as large, fine and well furnished, as those of Mayfair or of such aristocratic villages as Roehampton and Wimbledon. The shops, too, in many of those “low” quarters, though stocked for the supply of persons engaged in some industrious pursuit, are as full, and as rich, as those of Bond street or Regent street. The number of carriages also, kept for pleasure in those despised quarters, greatly exceeds the number of such carriages kept by the high aris-

ocracy in and about London. In the quantity and quality of good things which he uses, in his own dress and that of his family, in his table, furniture and books, or in whatever mode of expence he may prefer, a prosperous lawyer or merchant is not far behind the richest duke ; and the number of rich people in London who pursue an industrious career is very much greater than the number of rich lords. But it would be improper to measure the wealth of a society by the enjoyments of its richest members alone. Dividing the inhabitants of London and Paris into the same number of ranks with respect to the consumption of wealth, every London rank enjoys more good things than its corresponding Parisian rank. A second-rate merchant, in London, spends at least twice as much as a second-rate Parisian merchant ; a third-rate London advocate spends, perhaps, three times as much as a first-rate Parisian advocate ; a fourth-rate London attorney spends six times as much as a second-rate Parisian notary ; a physician in London, a surgeon, a dentist, a tradesman of whatever description, a servant from the butler to the scullion, a mechanic in whatever line, a porter or a common labourer, spends more, and in most cases a great deal more, than one of a corresponding rank in the Parisian scale. But this is not all. In London there are more first-rate merchants, lawyers and tradesmen *in proportion* to second-rate ones, more second-

rate ones in proportion to third-rate ones, and so on all down the scale. In a word, turn which way you will, London abounds with proofs of its enormous wealth.

Thus the foreigner is apt to fall into another error; to imagine that a very large proportion of the wealth of England is collected in London. He is undeceived again by visiting some great provincial towns of different descriptions, such as Bath, Liverpool and Leeds. Each of these resembles a large section of the metropolis; Bath being like Marylebone, Leeds like manufacturing Southwark, and Liverpool like the commercial Tower Hamlets. In point of size and general character Liverpool bears some resemblance to Bordeaux or New York, and Leeds to Lyons; but in America there is no town like Leeds, nor, either in America or France, any town like Bath. England abounds with such towns as Bath—mere pleasure towns, they may be called—such as Leamington, Hastings, Margate, Cheltenham and Brighton; with more of the same kind, though of smaller extent, such as Tonbridge Wells, Worthing, Harrowgate, Aberystwith, Southend, Lowestoft, and Sidmouth. Of towns like Leeds, while in the United States there is not one, and in France but few, there is in England a number without end, such as Macclesfield, Sheffield, Nottingham, Coventry, Birmingham and Manchester. Of towns like Liverpool,

THE WEALTH OF ENGLAND.

though there be several in the United States, there are many more in the United Kingdom, while neither in the United States nor in France are there any towns of a mixed character like Norwich and Glasgow. Again, neither in France nor in the United States are there any great provincial capitals like Edinburgh and Dublin. But after all, that for which, in respect to towns, England is most distinguished,—even more so than for the number and size of her pleasure towns,—is the vast number and great size of her smaller provincial capitals, which are neither seaports nor the seats of manufactures; such as York, Canterbury, Gloucester, Exeter, Shrewsbury, Reading, Colchester, and Bury St. Edmund's. And now, further, let the wealth of any English town whatsoever be compared with that of a town of the same character in any other country. With a single and no doubt very important exception, England has greatly the advantage. In the United States every labourer, not being a slave, obtains more and better food, more and better clothes, as well as a better lodging, than a labourer of equal skill in England. Without any further exception, the inhabitants of English provincial towns enjoy a greater quantity and variety of good things, approach nearer to the inhabitants of the capital in respect to the consumption of wealth, than people of a similar rank in the provincial towns of other countries.

A merchant of Liverpool or Bristol, a manufacturer of Birmingham or Leeds, be he first, second or third rate, indulges in expences for his house, his table, the education of his children and the amusement of his family, which to think of, only, would frighten a Bordeaux merchant or Lyons manufacturer of the same rank. What a French provincial doctor spends in a year, would not keep an English provincial doctor in equal practice for three months. Country attornies in England get and spend, on the average, ten times as much as French country attornies. Common tradesmen in all English country towns, bakers, butchers, cheesemongers and linendrapers, as well as mechanics, such as carpenters, builders and glaziers, live much better than a similar class of people in Paris; they have more rooms to live in; their rooms are better furnished; they, their wives and children are better dressed; they find it more easy to obtain comforts and indulge in luxuries. Surely there are fifty country towns in England, which contain a good inn, that is a comfortable innkeeper, for one French country town that contains a passable inn, held by a man who does not live so expensively as the keepers of most English alehouses. That English town is reckoned poor in which there are not some shops that would be considered good in the best quarter of London; and there are hundreds of towns in England, in which you can purchase almost every

thing that is commonly for sale in London. The number of booksellers' shops in the provincial towns of England, and the stocks which they contain, present a very striking contrast with the number and stocks of French booksellers' shops out of Paris. In the number and quality of horses and carriages kept for pleasure, English country towns surpass, very far indeed, French country towns of equal magnitude. Every town in England, that at all bears the character of the capital of a district, possesses a circulating library, such as would be called good in Paris or New York; while most of such towns, as well as many small towns, and indeed rural parts, miles away from any town, have the inestimable advantage of a book club. No English town containing 10,000 inhabitants is without foot pavements or gas lights, while many towns with less than 5,000 inhabitants are as well paved and well lighted as the finest quarter of London. In their literary and scientific institutions, such towns as Liverpool, Leeds and Birmingham appear to surpass the metropolis, allowing for the difference of numbers; and in this respect they obviously excel beyond comparison French or American towns of like magnitude. Another proof of the general diffusion of wealth in England, is the large proportion of the sums invested by savings-banks which is subscribed out of London; the whole fund, amounting to about £14,000,000, and sub-

scribed by persons little above the condition of labourers, being a proof of the wealth of England. But finally the most striking proof of the wealth of the English, all over England, is the facility with which, in any part of England, funds are raised for any undertaking that offers the least chance of profit. It is to this point especially that I would draw the attention of Americans.* Though thousands of millions have been spent in rendering England the most habitable country in the world, in making bad land good, on fences, farm buildings, roads, bridges, canals and docks, on the opening of mines, the building of manufactories and warehouses, not to mention houses, still it appears as if thousands of millions would be forthcoming for similar purposes, if there were but room for carrying such purposes into effect. Abundance of CAPITAL invested, and ready to be invested, is the most marked, nay the peculiar, characteristic

* "The great public work in this part of the United States in which the people are engaged, is the canal between the Chesapeake and the Ohio rivers, that is, between George Town and Washington on the one hand, and Pittsburgh on the western side of the Alleghany ridge on the other. This prodigious work, which is now in progress, is estimated by General Barnard at about twenty-two millions of dollars. The sum of fifteen hundred thousand dollars subscribed by the citizens of Washington, George Town and Alexandria, on the Potomac, has been obtained from Dutch capitalists, the house of Messrs. Crommelin of Amsterdam." *Three years in North America, by James Stuart, Esq. vol 2, page 62.—Third Edition.*

of England. By guessing at what it would take to put France, or one of the American states, into the same condition as England, with respect to the improvement of land, to farm buildings, roads, bridges, canals, wharfs, docks, manufactories, warehouses and machinery, &c., we may form some idea of the degree in which the fixed capital of the English exceeds that of the French or Americans: and yet the French or Americans, who have invested so small a capital in comparison with that invested by the English, have far less than the English ready for investment.* Money makes money, says the proverb; which, translated into the language of modern science, means that capital creates capital. In America, where there is so much room for the investment of capital, because so little capital has been invested, innumerable works, holding out the certainty of large profits, are projected, but for want of capital are not begun; while in England, where, by reason of the vast masses of capital already invested, there seems but little room for the profitable investment of more, millions accumulate

* "The canal (at Louisville) is two miles in the length, cut out of the solid rock, and in some places forty feet deep, and is of sufficient width to allow the largest class of steam boats to pass. Dry docks are to be constructed for the repairing of steam boats. *There is at present a want of funds*; but the work is so far advanced that there is no risk of its not being completed." *Stuart, vol. 2, page 290.*

so rapidly that funds are never wanted for even the most hazardous undertakings. How to obtain capital is the question in America ; * what to do with their capital is the puzzle of the English. In this difficulty the English build Waterloo bridges, which yield no profit, send goods to be sold in distant countries at less than prime cost, squander millions on South American speculations, lay out immense sums in the purchase of foreign securities, and lend money, by tens of millions at a time, to North American States, South American anarchies, and European tyrants great or small. If the wealth of a society depend on the proportion which capital bears to numbers, then, it is clear, the English are the richest people in the world.

What are the causes of the enormous wealth of England? This question has never been answered to the satisfaction of Americans ; who, descended from the English, using their language, able to use their knowledge, paying fewer taxes than the English, cultivating a much more fertile soil, and as well protected, to say the least, in the enjoyment of property, cannot perceive, in the reasons usually given for the peculiar wealth of England, any circumstance peculiar to the English. This question I propose to examine with a view to show, here, why the English are

* The state of Louisiana has lately borrowed a great sum of the English.

so much richer than the Americans; and, further on, how the Americans might become as rich as the English, if not richer. The question is of no little importance to the English themselves, and is full of the deepest interest to all new societies, like the American States and the English colonies in America and Australia.

All wealth being the produce of industry, it is evident that the wealth of a society must depend on the degree in which the productive powers of industry are improved by that society. What are the greatest improvements in the productive powers of industry; improvements, I mean, beyond that simple exertion of power, which in two individuals of equal strength, working separately in the same way, would raise equal amounts of produce? Adam Smith has said that the greatest improvement in the productive powers of industry is *division of labour*; others have dwelt on the great effects of *machinery*; and some again have taken pains to show, what is self evident, that the productive powers of industry are greatly increased by *the use of capital*. Unquestionably capital, machinery which is capital, and "division of labour," tend to increase the quantity of produce in proportion to the number of hands employed; but none of these improvements are primary causes, as some of them, and especially "division of labour," have been considered by political economists; each of them, on the con-

trary, though an immediate cause, is the effect of some antecedent cause. One cannot use capital merely by wishing to use it, nor can a single workman practice "division of labour," but the use of capital and "division of labour" result from some anterior improvement. What then is the first improvement in the productive powers of industry, that improvement on which others depend?

In the most simple operation of industry,—in that, for example, which savages perform when they hunt for subsistence,—two persons assisting each other would obtain more game in a given time than two persons hunting each by himself without concert; just as two greyhounds, running together, will kill more hares than four greyhounds running separately. The very first improvement, therefore, in the productive powers of industry, seems to be not division, but combination, of labour. Several individuals, by combining their labour, procure more food than they want: behold the second stage of social improvement; the society has obtained a capital. The possession of capital leads to the institution of property: it also leads to the division of employments. Some members of the society still cooperate in the production of food; others in making instruments which facilitate the production of food; and between these two parties an exchange takes place of their respective pro-

ductions: commerce has begun; the power of exchanging, on which, all economists agree, depends the division of employments. But now, as food is produced with less and less labour, the wants of the society increase, and a still further distribution of employments takes place: some build houses, some make clothes and some become dealers. Thus far it is plain, every step in civilization, every improvement in the productive powers of industry, including distribution of employments, has rested on concert or combination amongst all the members of the society.

But, thus far, all the members of the society are supposed to possess equal portions of capital. Such a state of things, if it were to last, would not admit of much further improvement in the productive powers of industry. No man would find others willing to employ his capital for his advantage as well as their own, rather than their own capital for their own exclusive advantage: no man, consequently, would have a motive for accumulating more capital than he could use with his own hands. This is to some extent the case in new American settlements, where a passion for owning land prevents the existence of a class of labourers for hire; and where, consequently, half the crop is sometimes left to rot upon the ground. In the next place, so long as the capital of the society was equally divided amongst all, it would be impossible to undertake any of those works which

require the employment of many hands and a fixed capital. It would be quite impossible, for instance, to build a ship or a bridge; for, even if a sufficient number of workmen to admit of that division of employments, which takes place in building a ship or a bridge, should possess the right sort of capital, and a sufficient quantity of it to enable them to wait for distant returns, by what means could that scattered capital be combined? and how could the profits be divided? Only, it would appear, by the institution of a joint stock company; a contrivance for the combination of capital in particular works, which is used only in the most advanced societies. Mankind have adopted a much more simple contrivance for promoting the accumulation of capital, and the use of capital, when required, both in large masses and in a fixed shape: they have divided themselves into owners of capital and owners of labour. But this division was, in fact, the result of concert or combination. The capitals of all being equal, one man saves *because* he expects to find others willing to work for him; other men spend *because* they expect to find some man ready to employ them; and if it were not for this readiness to co-operate, to act in concert or combination, the division of the industrious classes into capitalists and labourers could not be maintained.

A baker and a tailor, who deal with each other, are said to divide their labour: if they did so in

reality, each of them would make both the bread and the clothes which he wanted, and there would be no intercourse between them. Co-operating, dealing with, depending on, each other, they combine their labour: it is the employments which they divide; and, what is more, the division of their employments results from the combination of their labour. The two men divide the whole work, which is to be performed by their united labour for their common advantage. The workmen of a pin factory are said to divide their labour: if they did so in reality, each of them would make all the parts of a pin. As it is, each pin is the produce of many persons' *united labour*; many persons whose labour is united in order that the work, which it is to perform, may be easily divided amongst them. In this case, also, division of employments is an effect of combination of labour. In what case is a work divided amongst many, without combining the labour of those who are to perform the work?

But it may be said that this is a question of terms merely; that though there be a marked difference between the work performed and the labour which performs it, still, as either labour is divided amongst the several parts of a work, or the several parts of a work are divided amongst several labourers, it is indifferent whether we say division of work or division of labour. If so, by what terms are we to express that minute division.

of labour which takes place amongst the cottiers of Ireland, the small farmers of France and most free settlers in new colonies: a state of things, under which each labourer works by himself, and for himself only, with no larger capital than his own hands can employ, without exchange, or nearly so, and producing, even in the most favourable case,—that of the settler,—~~not~~ much more than enough for his own subsistence. If this be a dispute about terms only, how are we to express that combination of labour on an English farm, or a tobacco plantation in Virginia, which enables the English workmen or American slaves to raise so much more produce than they could possibly consume? The reader who may take the trouble to find an answer to these questions, will, I cannot help thinking, perceive, that “division of labour” is an improper term as commonly used; and, what is of far greater consequence, that the use of this improper term has kept out of sight the first great improvement in the productive powers of labour, namely, combination of power.

As for building a ship or making a road, so in the manufacture of pins, it is necessary to employ a large capital. A large capital applied to one purpose, may be said to be combined. A minute division of capital, such as takes place amongst the small farmers of France, the cottiers of Ireland and most settlers in new colonies, is

as unfavourable to production as the minute division of labour practised in those cases.

Combination of capital and labour, or combination of productive power, seems to be of two distinct sorts; *first*, that general combination which, if there were no restrictions on trade, would render mankind one vast co-operative society; general combination on which depends that general distribution of employments, or division of work, under which some men grow tea, some dig for metals and others build ships, some are farmers, some manufacturers and others merchants; *secondly*, that particular combination, on which depends the use of large masses of capital and labour in particular works, and the most beneficial division of those particular works.

Turning to the sources of the wealth of England, her agriculture, manufactures and commerce, it will be seen that all these display in the highest degree the advantages of both sorts of combination of power.

First, as to agriculture. No part of the population of America is exclusively agricultural, excepting slaves and their employers who combine capital and labour in particular works. Free Americans, who cultivate the soil, follow many other occupations. Some portion of the furniture and tools which they use is commonly made by themselves. They frequently build their own houses and carry to market, at whatever

distance, the produce of their own industry. They are spinners and weavers; they make soap and candles, as well as, in many cases, shoes and clothes for their own use. In America the cultivation of land is often the secondary pursuit of a blacksmith, a miller or a shopkeeper. In France a similar division of capital and labour takes place amongst several employments, though not to the same extent. The number of proprietors of land in France is supposed to exceed 5,000,000; the number of separate holdings or pieces of land is known to be about 10,000,000. But even supposing that, on the average, each proprietor owns two separate pieces of land, still it does not follow that two pieces of land are generally cultivated by one person. On the contrary, whilst the large properties are generally divided into several distinct farms, it does not very often happen that two or more of the smaller properties are united under a single farmer. Consequently, after making a liberal deduction for land which is not cultivated, the number of farmers or cultivators, not being hired labourers, probably exceeds 5,000,000. It is further estimated, that the number of agricultural labourers, who work for hire, amounts, with their wives and children, to about 5,000,000. Of these, however, not above two fifths, or 2,000,000, can be men. If the number of farmers be 5,000,000, and of farm servants 2,000,000, there must be 3,000,000

farmers who employ no labourers at all. Suppose each of the remaining 2,000,000 farmers to employ one labourer, the agricultural capital and labour of France would be divided into 5,000,000 parts, of which three fifths would be the smallest fractions into which capital and labour can be divided, and the remaining two fifths would consist of fractions only twice as large as the smallest. Since, however, some farmers employ more than one labourer, more than 3,000,000 farmers cannot employ any labourers; and it thus appears probable, that three fourths, at least, of the agricultural capital and labour of France are cut up into the smallest possible fractions, into single pairs of hands, and portions of capital such as one pair of hands can use. Limiting the smallest fractions to three fourths of the whole, the remaining quarter will consist of 1,250,000 capitalists, having amongst them 2,000,000 labourers. If 750,000 of these capitalists employ two labourers each, 500,000 employ about one labourer each; and for each of them, who is supposed to employ more than two labourers, an addition must be made to that number, each of whom employs only one labourer. "Il faut habiter un pays," says a modern French writer,* "où tout le monde est propriétaire, pour

* M. de Bonald (1826), quoted by Professor M'Culloch in note XIX (Division of Property by Will) of his edition of Smith's Wealth of Nations.

se faire une idée juste des inconvéniens et du malheur du *morcellement* infini des biens territoriaux." The mischief lies, however, in the division, not of the land, but of the capital and labour employed on the land.

One of the evils, resulting from the *morcellement* of agricultural capital and labour in France, is that the farmers and farm-labourers of that country, like those of the United States, not being slave owners or slaves, do not confine themselves to one pursuit. In England, on the contrary, a farmer is, generally speaking, nothing but a farmer, and an agricultural labourer works no where but on the farm. The English farm labourer is a miserable wretch, no doubt, because he obtains but a very small share of the produce of his labour; but this is a question, not of distribution, but of production. In England the agricultural class seems to have come to an understanding with the other classes to separate its employment from those of the manufacturer and dealer. Except in some of the wildest and worst cultivated districts, the practice, which is so common in France and America, of spinning wool by those who keep flocks, is gone quite out of fashion. Whatever manufactured object or mechanical work is required on an English farm, is procured at some shop in the nearest town or performed by some mechanic who lives in the town. The mixed produce of American or French

agriculture is, for the most part, sold in the nearest market, by those who raise it, to those who consume it ; while in England there is, between the producers and consumers, a distinct class of dealers, subdivided again into particular classes, such as cattle jobbers, dealers in corn, in hops and in wool. An English farmer seldom deals, even with his own labourers, for any part of the produce of his farm ; he pays for their labour with money, which they lay out, either directly in the nearest town, or through the medium of village shopkeepers. Thus the farmer and his men are occupied almost exclusively with the business of the farm.

English farming is also remarkable for a peculiar refinement in the distribution of employments, according to various circumstances of soil and climate. The county of Kent is somewhat more congenial to the growth of hops than the neighbouring county of Sussex : the Sussex farmer, therefore, abstains from growing hops, even for his own use ; the beer which his family drink is made of hops grown in Kent. There are some districts especially fit for the growth of natural and artificial grasses for fattening cattle ; and the farmer of such districts is seldom a cattle breeder, but purchases lean cattle from jobbers, who have purchased them from farmers in districts best suited to the breeding of cattle. Though the inhabitants of Norwich require a

great deal of cheese, yet the farmers thereabouts do not attempt to supply that demand. Their land is less suited to dairy farming than the land in Cheshire, from which county comes great part of the cheese consumed in Norwich; while there are towns again in Cheshire, which obtain the greater part of their flour from distant spots peculiarly suited to the growth of corn. Examples without end might be cited of this division of agricultural employments, which seems to be carried to a much higher pitch in England than in any other country. In France and the United States, though much greater differences of climate occasion a more marked separation of some agricultural employments,—such as the production of sugar in the Southern States for the use of the Northern States, and of oil in the South for the use of the North of France,—still a French or American cultivator generally seeks to raise whatever can be raised on his own land, which he either wants himself, or for which there is any demand in his own neighbourhood. The division of agricultural employments in England is all the more remarkable, because in England the differences of soil and climate are not very remarkable.

The advantage which England derives from confining her agriculturists to agricultural pursuits and, in various parts of the country, to that particular mode of agriculture best suited to each

district, becomes manifest in the superior skill of her farmers. The corn growers of Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk, the hop growers of Kent and Worcestershire, the sheep farmers of Sussex and Hampshire, the dairy farmers of Gloucestershire and Cheshire, the cattle-breeders and cyder-growers of Devonshire and Herefordshire, the breeders of horses in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire; all these, and many more which it would be tedious to mention, apply to their several pursuits a wonderful degree of knowledge, forethought and calculation. It is rather a science than an art which each of them pursues; storing up the facts which come to his knowledge, and from a knowledge of those facts adopting, as a system, that mode of proceeding from which he expects the most beneficial results. Thinking of the pains which an English farmer takes in draining and manuring his fields, in the disposition of his land for various crops, in the selection of seeds, in the use of the best instruments, in keeping up or improving his fruit trees, in the management of his working cattle, in maintaining a peculiar and perfect race of cattle or sheep, and in subdividing the work performed by his united labourers, one might venture to call him a philosopher; though the term would excite ridicule in England, where science is almost as much despised in the abstract as in practice it is industriously cultivated.

But the superior knowledge of English farmers

would be of little avail—it could not have been acquired indeed—if their capital and labour had been cut up into small fractional parts, as happens generally in France and America. In agriculture each farm is a particular work

The most striking characteristic of English farming is the combination of capital and labour in particular works. Even in England, those districts in which the farms are largest, and in which each farmer employs the largest capital and the greatest number of labourers, are known to produce more, in proportion to the hands employed, than those less civilized districts in which the three elements of production, land, capital and labour, are divided into smaller portions. But agricultural capital and labour are more combined in those parts of England, where the lowest degree of combination occurs, than in those parts of France or America (slave plantations excepted) which are distinguished for the highest degree of combination. In order to observe in the United Kingdom the bad effects of that division of capital and labour which takes place in France or America, one must travel to Ireland, where, in some districts, the separate fractions of capital and labour are almost as numerous as the cultivators. Well-informed Frenchmen are satisfied that the division of capital and labour in their country will, if it be carried much further, reduce the agriculture of France

to a cottier system, like that of some parts of Ireland, under which the produce of industry is scarcely more than sufficient to feed those who work. In America, truly, the smallest fraction of capital and labour obtains a considerable produce; but then it should be remembered that, in America, the chief element of production, the land, is not divided into small pieces as in France and Ireland. Hereafter I shall have occasion to notice the causes and effects of the division of capital and labour in America. Recurring to the agriculture of England, the large farms of that country exemplify the proverb—union is force. The most scientific of English farmers, if he were to apply his knowledge to the cultivation of a single field, would not raise a much greater produce than the most ignorant of Irish cottiers. The great extent of his farm allows full scope for the exercise of his superior knowledge. That of which he has a superior knowledge, is the art of cultivation on a large scale: and for the practice of this art, capital and labour in proportion to land are indispensable. Holding a large farm, and employing capital and labour in proportion, he is able to wait for distant returns, to pursue the best course of crops, to adopt improvements which at first bear the character of experiments, to employ many hands in one field, at one time, in one work, and when it is required, for a considerable period of time without intermission;

finally is able to make that distribution of employments amongst his labourers, which, after combination of labour in single works, is the greatest improvement in the productive powers of industry. The results are obvious. By means of drainage and manure, an immense extent of land in England, which was once sterile, now possesses the highest degree of fertility; and in every part of the country, the fertility of land is carefully preserved. In France, on the contrary, the practice of exhausting the natural fertility of land is general, while in America it may be described as almost universal.* But the grand result of the superiority of English agriculture is, that whilst in France about two thirds, and in America probably three quarters, of the people are employed in agriculture, more than two thirds, it is believed, of the people of England, are fed by the agricultural industry of less than one-third. The greatness of England, notwithstanding laws which forbid her manufacturers to exchange the produce of their industry for the surplus food of other countries, is incomprehensible to a foreigner until he observes the excellence of her agriculture. That excellence consists in raising from a given extent of land, without impoverishing the land, and, with a given

* The causes of the exhaustion of land in the United States are explained in the Note on the Origin, Progress and Prospects, of Slavery in America.

number of hands, a far greater produce than results from the labour of the same number of hands, on the same extent of soil, in any part of the world.*

Less than one third of the people being engaged in agriculture, more than two thirds are set free, as it were, to follow other pursuits. Of these, a considerable proportion are engaged in manufactures.* The vastness of the produce of English manufacturing industry, in proportion to the number of hands employed, may be roughly estimated by three separate considerations: first, the power of tens of millions of men is obtained from steam, which produces without consuming; secondly, notwithstanding a load of English restrictions on trade, the English are, by means of their manufactures, the greatest commercial people in the world; thirdly, notwithstanding heavy taxation and the high price of food in England, objects of English manufacture are so cheap as to drive out of any market, where fair

* "No one will presume to say that the agriculture of France is nearly as well improved as that of Britain—that it is not indeed a hundred years behind ours, and yet while there are more than two thirds of the people of France employed in this inferior cultivation, less than one third of our people suffice to carry on the infinitely superior system of cultivation adopted in this country. It is in this single circumstance that the great superiority of our domestic economy over that of the French chiefly consists." *Professor M'Culloch's Edition of Smith's Wealth of Nations*—Note XIX. vol. 4, page 475.

competition is allowed, similar objects made any where but in England.

As in agriculture, so in manufactures, every improvement in the productive powers of industry may be traced to general and particular combination of power, leading to general and particular division of employment.

The same complete division of employments, which makes the English farmer nothing but a farmer, makes all the English people who are engaged in manufactures nothing but manufacturers. Further, whilst in France and America the capital of one man is frequently divided amongst several different manufactures, the attention of the English manufacturing capitalist is confined, almost, exclusively, to a single object. Thus the English manufacturer is, as such, a man of single purpose, "a man with one idea." Hence that earnest, unremitting and successful pursuit of improvement, which is conspicuous in every branch of English manufacture.

Another peculiarity in English manufactures seems worthy of remark ; I allude to the congregation in one place of vast numbers who are engaged in the same branch of manufacture. In some cases, no doubt, the main seat of a particular fabric is determined by natural circumstances, such as abundance of coal or iron, or falling water : in other cases it appears to have been settled by accident. In every case, how-

ever, that congregation of numbers engaged in the same pursuit, by promoting the interchange of many persons' thoughts on one all-engrossing subject, by exciting the inventive powers, by preventing a fortunate discoverer from monopolizing the use of his invention, and above all, by stimulating competition, must have had a large share in the progress of improvement.

The great effects of particular combination are still more plain. For the success of some fabrics, a high and constant temperature is required. This could not be obtained by any one of a number of small manufacturers: it is easily obtained by him who employs a large capital, and collects a great many people under one roof. There is scarcely any fabric of which the produce, in proportion to the hands employed, is not greatly augmented by the use of steam power; but it is of the essence of steam power to give effect to the labour of united numbers. The general use of steam power in England depends, therefore, on the combination of capital and labour in particular works. The distribution amongst many hands of the several parts of a particular work is greatly facilitated by the congregation of many hands under one roof. In England, accordingly, all the most flourishing manufactures are carried on in large factories, with large capitals, and by a great number of hands, brought together for the purpose of distributing amongst them the

several parts of each work. Those manufactures which are conducted by small fractions of capital and labour, such as the silk works of Spitalfields and the lace works of Buckinghamshire, are rapidly perishing: that is, they are in the course of being superseded by the use of large factories; those which have been mentioned, by the large silk factories of Macclesfield and Manchester, and by the large lace factories of Nottingham and Tiverton. Universally, indeed, throughout all the branches of English manufactures, as in all of them there is an obvious tendency to improvement, so in all of them one observes a tendency to increased combination of capital and labour in particular works.

The commerce of England, both domestic and foreign, exhibits like her agriculture and manufactures, a high degree of combination of power, both general and particular. The whole commercial work performed by the people of England is so admirably distributed, that one might imagine it to be under the control of a single will; while no particular operation languishes for want of sufficient force to carry it on. In vain might the state of New York have projected the Erie canal, if a supply of labour for completing it had not been obtained from Ireland: that great work was performed by Irishmen, and could not have been performed with American free labour, which, for reasons to be stated hereafter, can

seldom be used in combination.* The peculiar skill with which the English apply capital and labour to the business of exchange, might be proved by a thousand facts: four of the most remarkable will suffice for this general notice. First, while in France or America, the prices of the same commodity are often very different at different but not very distant places, all over England prices are nearly always on a level: secondly, it is estimated that the rail road between Manchester and Liverpool saves 600,000*l.* a year on the cost of carriage for goods and passengers between those two towns only: thirdly,

* "The truth is," says Captain Basil Hall in a letter to Mr. Wilmot Horton, published by the latter, "that there is no hired labouring class, properly so called, in any part of America, *excepting where the ground is tilled by negro slaves*: I mean that there is no class of men who support themselves, *permanently*, by wages derived from labouring in the service of others. There is, in fact, no labour to be had for hire, of such a sort, at least, as to produce *permanently* a return greater than the wages which such hired labourer requires. I speak now of agricultural labour; and I may say that it is almost an axiom in those countries, that *there is no productive labour in the fields of a new country, except that which results from the sweat of the proprietor's own brow*. Canals and other casual public works, and other menial service of the cities, and even the smaller towns, must, of course, be done by hirelings; but I must again and again remark that it is the characteristic feature of all kinds of labour in those countries to be for the time only."

"The workmen employed (in making a road in New York State) are chiefly Irish." *Stuart, vol. 2, page 492.*

the best informed persons concur in supposing, that twenty-nine thirtieths, at least, of the currency of the northern manufacturing districts consist of bills of exchange, which, though they circulate with much greater ease than silver or gold, cost next to nothing : fourthly, the foreign and domestic bills of exchange payable by bankers in London, which often amount to some millions in one day, instead of being presented for payment each bill to the house on which it is drawn, are all carried to the same spot, where a general exchange of bills takes place amongst the several houses ; and in this way, one clerk from each house performs in an hour or two, and without any money, a work which, if each bill had been presented to the house on which it was drawn, would have required the labour of several clerks, from all the houses, during many hours, and the use of some millions of money.

This brief notice of the sources of England's wealth shows why that wealth is so great in proportion to the number of people who enjoy it ; and the more the subject shall be examined the more plainly, I feel assured, will it appear, that, in all countries, the produce of industry must be in proportion to the degree in which capital and labour are combined and employments are divided. But it may be said that this is an idle speculation, leading to no conclusions of practical utility ; that, whether or not the great wealth of England

be owing to combination of power, the English will continue to pursue that course which they find so productive; and that other nations will not follow their example one day sooner in consequence of perceiving the causes of their wealth. To meet such observations, I offer the following conclusions, derived from the principle that, as respects the produce of industry, union is force.

1. I have said that combination of power appears to be of two distinct kinds, general and particular, leading to two distinct kinds of division of employments. But this distinction has been drawn merely for the purpose of explaining a principle not hitherto noticed. Considering the operation of industry throughout the world as one great work, it will be seen that all the parts of the work, from so great a part as the growth of tea in China, to so small a one as the making of a pin's head in England, are productive in proportion to the degree in which men help each other. Here, then, we perceive exactly, how war between nations, and restrictions on trade, interfere with the production of wealth; how friendly intercourse amongst different nations, by promoting concert or combination, on which depends division of employments, adds to the general powers of industry; how facilities of communication amongst different countries, and in each country, promote the increase of wealth; how a new road or canal enables more people to live in

comfort ; and how millions owe all their enjoyments, nay, their very existence, to the institution of the post for letters.

2. From considering the increase of productive power derived from combination, one perceives how various tenures of land in different countries, and in the same country, influence the production of wealth. Three examples will suffice. The poverty of French agriculture,—the large proportion of the people of France who are engaged in agriculture, leaving but a small proportion for other pursuits,—is owing to the law of division, which at a Frenchman's death cuts up his estate into portions as numerous as his children. In Ireland, again, it is the minute subdivision of land, which causes a minute subdivision of capital and labour, and renders the produce of agricultural industry, in proportion to the hands employed, so much less than that of the same kind of industry in England. Lastly, a history of colonization would show, that all new colonies, having a vast territory at their disposal, have prospered or languished according as the governments by which they were founded took care, or neglected, to dispose of the land to be colonized with a view to combination of power amongst the colonists. In the case of the last colony founded by England, the greatest pains were taken to disperse the colonists, to cut up their capital and labour into the smallest fractional parts, whence

a miserable failure with all the elements of success; but on this subject I have to dwell at length in another place.*

3. By ascertaining how much the productiveness of English industry depends on the most artificial combination of labour and division of employments; by perceiving the extreme complication of the machine which produces the wealth of England, and the close dependence of all its parts upon each other, the English may learn the peculiar evils which any serious political convulsion would inflict on them.

After exhausting the language of admiration in a description of the actual wealth of England, one might suppose that in this respect the English could make no further progress. This would be a mistake. It would be hard to name a single instance of the wealth of England, which does not exhibit, at this present time, a tendency to improvement. Though of late years the roads of England have been reckoned the best in the world, yet on every great road, and many cross roads, some striking improvement is now taking place. Though the carriage and foot pavements of English towns have long been celebrated as perfect, yet these are, as well in country towns as in London, in the course of being greatly improved. The number of good houses in London,

* Note XII.

and of people who can afford to keep a carriage, astonishes a foreigner ; yet in every direction new houses of this class are in the course of being built ; and no sooner are a hundred of them finished, than they are all occupied and each of them has a carriage at the door. In ninety-nine out of a hundred old streets, all over England, you will find new houses greatly superior to those by their side. The difference in point of utility and appearance between old houses which are pulled down in London and those which take their place, is, universally, almost as great as the difference between the old and new London bridges ; a difference, which is striking to the English themselves, and is grateful even to such of them as, hating innovation, love to talk of the wisdom of their ancestors. But a catalogue of those objects, which exhibit the actual progress of improvement in England, would comprise nearly all that is necessary, useful or agreeable, to Englishmen : it would include every useful or ornamental art, from the great arts of printing, architecture, engineering, painting and sculpture, down to the lowest occupation of human industry ; besides the whole list of sciences, from the most important, such as chemistry, medicine and government, down to the meanest department of human knowledge. In England, improvement is every where. In England, advancement from good to better is a universal principle. Where all this

will end, who shall venture to predict? Sober imaginations are confounded by observing the very rapid progress, which wealthy and civilized England is at this time making in wealth and civilization.

NOTE II.

MISERY OF THE BULK OF THE PEOPLE.

Who are the bulk of the people—misery of the bulk of the people a favourite topic in England—proofs of misery—what is a pauper—factory children—Irish wages—increase of gin shops—cheapness of English children—murder of parish apprentices—other trades in pauper children—climbing boys—prostitutes—cheapness of women—degradation of the common people—the common people are too cheap to be happy.

AMONGST our wise ancestors the bulk of the people was slaves, as is still the case in Russia and the southern states of North America. In modern states, which deserve to be called civilized, a part of the people consists of the labouring class; that is, a class, whose only property is their labour, and who live by the sale of that property to the other classes. The proportion which the labouring class bears to the other classes, is very different in several of the most civilized modern states. In the northern states of the American union, it may be doubted whether so many as a tenth of the people would fall under the description of hired labourers.* In France, the *morcelle-*

* “Although it is not a general practice for gentlemen in

ment of land has converted a very large portion of the people into the class of proprietors of land. Deducting from the remainder the class of capitalists, those who live on government annuities, soldiers, and indeed all who do not labour for wages, the labouring class, properly so called, will not be estimated at more than a third of the whole population. In Ireland the cottier system takes a great majority of the people out of the class of hired labourers, and turns them into something between capitalists and workmen. In Spain and Portugal, if these may be called civilized nations, the class of people who sell their labour, who live by wages, seem to be very small indeed. In some of the Italian states, hired labourers bear a small proportion to the other classes. On the continent of Europe, the proportion of hired labourers appears to be greatest in Holland. But in England, where the system of large farms is established, where a great part of the population is engaged in manufactures, and where, in every department of industry, a complete separation has taken place between

Mr. Verplank's situation in this part of the United States, in which I mean to comprehend the populous parts of New York States, Pennsylvania and New England, to be thus actively employed in agricultural operations, I mean actually to work with their farm servants, nothing is more common in the United States, taken as a whole, than for proprietors to work in the field at the same occupation as their servants." *Stuart, Vol. 1, page 460.*

capitalists and workmen, the labouring class compose the bulk of the people. The bulk of the people,—the great body of the people, the vast majority of the people,—these are the terms, by which English writers and speakers usually describe those whose only property is their labour.

If there be one subject in particular upon which Englishmen love to dwell, it is the misery and degradation of the bulk of the people. Every year that melancholy subject forms the matter of numerous petitions to the legislature, of many speeches in parliament, of discussion at public meetings in all parts of the country, of some large volumes, of innumerable pamphlets, and of frequent, one might say constant, remarks in nearly all newspapers, and in all political magazines. There are some cheap newspapers, written expressly for the labouring class, which treat of scarce anything else; and the political sect called Owenites talk of nothing else. But the writers of these cheap newspapers, and these sectaries, differ from writers and speakers of the conservative or tory party only as to the way of curing the misery of the bulk of the people. The Standard newspaper, Blackwood's Magazine, and the Quarterly Review, all high tory journals, dwell on the prevalence of misery with as much zeal as the Poor man's Guardian, and other radical publications. Mr. Owen, Mr. Carlile and Mr. Cobbett do not appear more anxious than Mr.

Sadler and Dr. Southey to remove the misery of the working classes. Mr. Sadler who, by the way, has written a large book on the causes and remedies of pauperism, lately declared in the house of commons that the working classes in England are white slaves. It was a tory bishop who first called the attention of the house of lords to the fact, that Englishmen are harnessed to carts like cattle. Mr. Wilmot Horton, after Mr. Sadler the most industrious writer and speaker on the subject of pauperism, who lately delivered a course of lectures on that subject at the London mechanic's institution, was a member of parliament, a privy counsellor and a tory. Concerning the misery and degradation of the bulk of the people of England, men of every order, as well as every party, unite and speak continually; farmers, parish officers, clergymen, magistrates, judges on the bench, members on either side of both houses of parliament, the king in his addresses to the nation, moralists, statesmen, philosophers; and finally the poor creatures themselves, whose complaints are loud and incessant.

Of comprehensive words, the two most frequently used in English politics are distress and pauperism. After these, of expressions applied to the state of the poor, the most common are vice and misery, wretchedness, sufferings, ignorance, degradation, discontent, depravity, drunkenness, and the increase of crime; with many more of a like nature.

The measures which have been gravely proposed as remedies for the misery of the English working classes amount to, at least, nineteen; namely, a fall of rent; the conversion of tythes to the use of the poor; more protection for home manufactures; the repeal of the corn laws; abolition of the poor laws; correction of the poor laws; poor laws for Ireland; spade husbandry; home colonization; gardens and cows for the poor; abolition of the national debt; other modes of lessening taxation; a more liberal expenditure by the government; more paper money; emigration; universal education; universal suffrage; moral restraint, or promiscuous intercourse; and property in common, or rather no property at all. Each of these specifics is earnestly recommended by its partizans, and as vehemently opposed by the partizans of nearly all the others; but on two points nearly all parties agree. They concur in describing as excessive the evil which it is their object to cure, and in expressing their solemn belief that, unless a remedy be found for it, some dreadful convulsion must ensue. Upon the latter of these points I shall have to remark in another place; the former is the proper subject of this note.

There are proofs without end of the misery of the bulk of the English people. The late insurrection of the peasantry of the South of England, and the modern practice of burning farm-produce, are universally attributed to the misery and dis-

content of those unfortunate beings. If the English had been a martial people, those forlorn men, once roused as they were, would either have destroyed the classes whom they consider their oppressors or have perished in a servile war. White slaves, they have been very properly called. It was some of this class, whom a bishop described as being harnessed to carts like cattle. In America, too, they harness men to carts; but then they treat them as valuable cattle; give them plenty to eat; shelter them from the weather; keep them in good heart; and bring up their little ones in clover. English slaves are harnessed to carts, and ill-fed, ill-clothed, ill housed, and variously ill-treated into the bargain. American slaves live longer than their masters, while English slaves die prematurely of hunger, wet, cold and sorrow. In America the increase of slaves, in one way only,—that is, by births, is more rapid than the increase of free people in three ways, by births, by the emancipation of slaves, and by immigration: and the proportion of slaves being a hundred years old is 1 in 1400, while the same proportion of whites is 1 in about 14000; showing a difference of 10 to 1 in favour of the longevity of slaves. The peasant of the South of England suffers nearly all the evils, but enjoys none of the advantages of slavery. He is not a freeman, nor is he a slave; he is a pauper. What a pauper is, Americans may learn from the fol-

lowing description of the "bold peasantry of England," which I extract from one of the countless pamphlets on pauperism lately written by Englishmen.

"What is that defective being, with calfless legs and stooping shoulders, weak in body and mind, inert, pusillanimous, and stupid, whose premature wrinkles and furtive glance tell of misery and degradation? That is an English peasant or pauper; for the words are synonymous. His sire was a pauper, and his mother's milk wanted nourishment. From infancy his food has been bad as well as insufficient; and he now feels the pains of unsatisfied hunger nearly whenever he is awake. But half-clothed, and never supplied with more warmth than suffices to cook his scanty meals, cold and wet come to him, and stay by him, with the weather. He is married, of course; for to this he would have been driven by the poor laws, even if he had been, as he never was, sufficiently comfortable and prudent to dread the burden of a family. But, though instinct and the overseer have given him a wife, he has not tasted the highest joys of husband and father. His partner and his little ones being like himself, often hungry, seldom warm, sometimes sick without aid, and always sorrowful without hope, are greedy, selfish, and vexing; so, to use his own expression, he "hates the sight of them," and resorts to his hovel only because a hedge affords

less shelter from the wind and rain. Compelled by parish law to support his family, which means to join them in consuming an allowance from the parish, he frequently conspires with his wife to get that allowance increased, or prevent its being diminished. This brings begging, trickery, and quarrelling; and ends in settled craft. Though he have the inclination, he wants the courage to become, like more energetic men of his class, a poacher or smuggler on a large scale; but he pilfers occasionally, and teaches his children to lie and steal. His subdued and slavish manner towards his great neighbours shows that they treat him with suspicion and harshness. Consequently he at once dreads and hates them; but he will never harm them by violent means. Too degraded to be desperate, he is only thoroughly depraved. His miserable career will be short: rheumatism and asthma are conducting him to the workhouse, where he will breathe his last without one pleasant recollection, and so make room for another wretch who may live and die in the same way. This is a sample of one class of English peasants. Another class is composed of men, who, though paupers to the extent of being in part supported by the parish, were not bred and born in extreme destitution, and who, therefore, in so far as the moral depends on the physical man, are qualified to become wise, virtuous and happy. They have large muscles,

an upright mien, and a quick perception. With strength, energy, and skill, they would earn a comfortable subsistence as labourers, if the modern fashion of paying wages out of the poor box did not interfere with the due course of things, and reduce all the labourers of a parish, the old and the young, the weak and the strong, the idle and the industrious, to that lowest rate of wages, or rather of weekly payment to each, which in each case is barely sufficient for the support of life. If there were no poor laws, or if the poor laws were such that labour was paid in proportion to the work performed, and not according to a scale founded on the power of gastric juice under various circumstances, these superior men would be employed in preference to the inferior beings described above, would earn twice as much as the others could earn, and would have every motive for industry, providence, and general good conduct. As it is, their superior capacity as labourers is of no advantage to them. They have no motive for being industrious or prudent. What they obtain between labour and the rate is but just enough to support them miserably. They are tempted to marry for the sake of an extra allowance from the parish : and they would be sunk to the lowest point of degradation but for the energy of their minds, which they owe to their physical strength. Courage and tenderness are said to be allied : men of this class usually make

good husbands and affectionate parents. Impelled by want of food, clothes and warmth, for themselves and their families, they become poachers wherever game abounds, and smugglers when opportunity serves. By poaching or smuggling, or both, many of them are enabled to fill the bellies of their children, to put decent clothes on the backs of their wives, and to keep the cottage whole, with a good fire in it, from year's end to year's end. The villains ! why are they not taken up ? They are taken up sometimes, and are hunted always, by those who administer rural law. In this way they learn to consider two sets of laws,—those for the protection of game, and those for the protection of home manufactures,—as specially made for their injury. Be just to our unpaid magistrates ! who perform their duty even to the shedding of man's blood, in defence of pheasants and restrictions on trade. Thus the bolder sort of husbandry labourers, by engaging in murderous conflicts with gamekeepers and preventive men, become accustomed to deeds of violence, and, by living in jails, qualified for the most desperate courses. They also imbibe feelings of dislike, or, rather, of bitter hatred, towards the rural magistracy, whom they regard as oppressors and natural enemies ; closely resembling, in this respect, the defective class of peasants from whom they differ in so many particulars. Between these two descriptions of peasantry there is another,

which partakes of the characteristics of both classes, but in a slighter degree, except as regards their fear and hatred of the rural aristocracy. In the districts where paupers and game abound, it would be difficult to find many labourers not coming under one of these descriptions. By courtesy, the entire body is called the bold peasantry of England. But is nothing done by the "nobility, clergy, and gentry," to conciliate the affection of the pauper mass by whose toil all their own wealth is produced? Charity! The charity of the poor laws, which paupers have been taught to consider a right, which operates as a curse to the able-bodied and well-disposed, whilst it but just enables the infirm of all ages to linger on in pain and sorrow. Soup! Dogs'-meat, the paupers call it. They are very ungrateful; but there is a way of relieving a man's necessities which will make him hate you; and it is in this way, generally, that soup is given to the poor. Books, good little books, which teach patience and submission to the powers that be! With which such paupers as obtain them usually boil their kettles, when not deterred by fear of the reverend donor. Of this gift the design is so plain and offensive, that its effect is contrary to what was intended, just as children from whom obedience is very strictly exacted are commonly rebels at heart. What else? is nothing else done by the rural rich to win the love of the rural

poor? Speaking generally, since all rules have exceptions, the privileged classes of our rural districts take infinite pains to be abhorred by their poorest neighbours. They inclose commons. They stop footpaths. They wall in their parks. They set spring-guns and man-traps. They spend on the keep of high bred dogs what would support half as many children, and yet persecute a labouring man for owning one friend in his cur. They make rates of wages, elaborately calculating the minimum of food that will keep together the soul and body of a clodhopper. They breed game in profusion for their own amusement, and having thus tempted the poor man to knock down a hare for his pot, they send him to the treadmill, or the antipodes, for that inexpiable offence. They build jails, and fill them. They make new crimes and new punishments for the poor. They interfere with the marriages of the poor, compelling some, and forbidding others to come together. They shut up paupers in workhouses, separating husband and wife, in pounds by day, and wards by night. They harness poor men to carts. They superintend alehouses, decry skittles, deprecate beer-shops, meddle with fairs, and otherwise curtail the already narrow amusements of the poor. Even in church, where some of them solemnly preach that all are equal, they sit on cushions, in pews, boarded, matted, and sheltered by curtains from the wind and the vulgar gaze, whilst the

lower order must put up with a bare bench on a stone floor, which is good enough for them. Every where they are ostentatious in the display of wealth and enjoyment ; whilst in their intercourse with the poor they are suspicious, quick at taking offence, vindictive when displeased, haughty, overbearing, tyrannical and wolfish ; as it seems in the nature of man to be towards such of his fellows as, like sheep, are without the power to resist."

In the parishes of the north of England the system of pauperism has not been so generally established. This difference is commonly attributed to the prevalence of manufactures in the north. But then, the misery of the labouring class employed in manufactures, though different in some respects from the misery that attends the pauper system, is equal to it in degree, if not more obvious and deplorable. Last year a mass of evidence was laid before parliament touching the condition of children employed in factories, which describes a system of torture, compared with which the treatment of American slaves appears truly benevolent. When this evidence was published the whole press of England repeated, day after day, that the worst kind of slavery exists in England. Children of tender years, it was shown, babies they would be called in America, are shut up in factories during 12, 14 and 16 hours every week day, and there compelled to

work incessantly, or as hard, at least, as their slight frames will permit, and for wages which but just satisfy their ruined appetites. The pale cheeks, parched lips, swoln stomachs, deformed limbs and melancholy looks, of these little wretches will be easily imagined. They die off with strange rapidity ; but the places of those who perish are instantly filled, and a frequent change of persons makes no alteration in the scene.

To remedy this evil a law is proposed, to fix within some limit dictated by common humanity the number of hours during which children shall be employed in factories. But let us suppose that a law should be passed, of which the humanity would not appear extravagant, to forbid altogether the employment of young children in factories. The consequence of such a law must be, that the parents of children who had been employed in factories would no longer be able to support those children. No parent, no mother, who has the means of supporting a child at home, sends it to be worked to death in a factory : unless we are to suppose, what has, indeed, been asserted by some, that the working class in the manufacturing districts are so deeply degraded as to sell their children's labour, or lives, deliberately for the sake of gin. Not believing this assertion, though it may be true in a few cases, it appears to me that the only choice of the parents lies between two evils ; on the one hand

the factory, with its probable result, death by disease of which the progress is hardly perceptible; on the other, immediate, palpable starvation at home. Such a law as I have supposed would deprive the parents of this choice, would compel them to suffer that evil which, since they seek to avoid it, they appear to consider the greater of the two. I make this remark, not to disparage the humanity of those who would pass laws for the mitigation of English slavery, but for the purpose of explaining, that the misery of these factory children results from the misery of their parents: they are all miserable, fathers, mothers, and children.

Though the remote causes of their misery form the subject of endless controversy, its immediate cause seems as plain as that two and two make four. Their only property is their labour. They take this property to market. They find the market overstocked with labour: there are more sellers than buyers. The sellers, in *ex facie* live, undersell each other, till they reduce the market-price of their property to what political economists call the minimum of wages,—to that sum, namely, which will barely supply the labourer with necessaries according to his estimate of what is necessary. In every condition of life an Englishman's estimate of what is necessary rises above that which is formed by people of the same rank in most other countries. To an European

labourer clothes are necessary : to a Hindoo labourer they are not. The necessary clothes of an English labourer are better than those of a French labourer. An English workman considers bread necessary ; an Irish workman is content with potatoes. If, therefore, the English markets of labour were confined to Englishmen, and if, above all, pains were taken to raise still higher the English labourer's estimate of what is necessary, the minimum of wages in England would probably become sufficient to support all labourers in a state of decency and comfort. But the English markets of labour, and especially those of manufacturing labour are not confined to Englishmen : they are full of Irish labourers, who fly from Ireland to escape death by famine. These, whose estimate of necessary wages is a hovel, rags and potatoes, by underselling the English workman, by consenting to work for the lowest wages that will support life, compel the English labourer to adopt the same course, and thus reduce the general minimum of wages to a wretched pittance. The Irish workman is content with his wretchedness ; the English workman is not. Here lies the only difference between them. The discontent of the English, if properly encouraged, might soon lead to a higher minimum of wages, were it not for the competition of the Irish. It is the competition of Irish labour, which ruins the manufacturing population of England. In some dif-

ficult manufactures, truly, where the labour of the barbarous and easily satisfied Irishman would not be worth having at any price, we find a rate of wages, high when compared with that which always attends Irish competition. But improvements in the use of steam power, rendering the work performed by man's labour more simple and easy, have lately diminished, and will still further diminish, the number of those difficult manufactures; which already must be considered as exceptions to the general rule. In English manufactures, the general rule is Irish wages.

English work and Irish wages! "Peter Moreau," says P. L. Courier in his *Village Gazette*—"Peter Moreau and his wife are dead, aged twenty-five years. Too much work has killed them; and many besides. We say—work like a negro, like a galley slave: we ought to say—work like a free-man." I say, work like a Lancashire weaver. There is no such work in France or America, even amongst slaves; all day long, from Monday morning till Saturday night, week after week, and year after year, till the machine is worn out. Talk of negroes and galley slaves: American slaves, or convicts in New South Wales, are fat and happy compared with very many free-born Englishmen. By the way, it happens, not rarely so as to be matter of wonder, but so often as to pass unnoticed, that Englishmen commit crimes for the purpose of becoming galley slaves in New

South Wales. They do not keep their purpose secret ; they declare it loudly, with tears and passionate exclamations, to the magistrate who commits them for trial, to the jury who try them, and to the judge who passes sentence on them ; and all this is published in the newspapers, but so often that no one exclaims—Great God, am I in merry England ! Well may judges on the bench talk of the misery and degradation of the people !

Of this misery and degradation, there are some who say, the cause is gin : it may be so, but let us see. Every one remarks the increase of gin-shops. In all those parts of Leeds or Manchester, and of London too, where the poorest people live, there you find, in almost every dirty street, not one but several fine houses, handsomely stuccoed, curiously painted, ornamented with plate-glass and polished brass ; in the windows, placards inviting custom by such expressions as “ mountain dew ” and “ cream of the valley ? ” inside, great barrels of spirits gaily painted and disposed for show, carved mahogany and more polished brass, with men and women, smartly dressed, smiling welcome to all who enter. The doors of these splendid dens are carefully hung so as to fly open with a touch and shut in an instant ; whether for the convenience of those dram-drinkers who are ashamed of their taste, or to give to the concern an air of mystery, which pleases the ignorant,

Messrs. Thompson and Fearon can best tell. *These gentlemen, who, being rich, are highly respectable, keep the largest gin shop in England ; in the world. It is situated (I mention this as a guide to Americans visiting London) on Holborn Hill near to Saffron Hill ; a quarter in which Irish wages prevail and pawnbrokers abound. Here gin is served by young women dressed up like the *belle limonadière* of a Paris coffee house, and the establishment in all its parts is nearly as fine as *Ferey's* or the *Café de Paris*. There is another great gin-shop, not much inferior to it, a little further to the west, adjoining the gate of Gray's Inn ; two or three close by in Chancery Lane ; and twenty or thirty not far off. In half an hour you may visit a hundred. What a contrast between the finery of the shops and the beggarly appearance of the customers ! Amongst these are few really old people ; but then plenty of the young people appear very old. Livid cheeks, deep wrinkles, blood shot eyes, brown teeth or white gums without teeth, skin and bone, shaking hands, sore legs, creeping palsy, a hacking cough, rags, filth and stench ; these are marks by which to know the regular gin-drinker. Nine out of ten of all, who may enter the finest gin-shop in Manchester of a Sunday morning, will show one or more of these marks ; counting women, boys and girls, as well as men, but not the children, who, of course, are only beginners. In*

some great towns of the north, they have low counters and small glasses on purpose for the small children : in London the children stand on tiptoe to pay for half a glass of gin ; but London will improve. As to gin-shops, London is improving most rapidly, both in number and in finery ; every week, almost every day, producing a new gin-shop, fitted up with spring doors, plate-glass, carved mahogany or rose wood, and polished brass ; all more “elegant,” as they say in America, than the gin-shops which sprung up the week before. But the quarter of London, in which the greatest increase of fine gin-shops has lately taken place, is Spitalfields and its neighbourhood. I have said before, that the silk manufacture of Spitalfields is perishing. The most zealous enemy of gin-shops does not pretend that the increase of gin-shops in Spitalfields has ruined the Spitalfields manufacture ; but the ruin of the Spitalfields manufacture may have caused the increase of gin-shops in Spitalfields. This is my humble opinion, founded on the considerations which follow.

Generally, a man understands his own affairs better than other people understand them for him. The common people of London have a saying, lately adopted but now proverbial—“ To live, be a pawnbroker or keep a gin-shop.” Here the increase of gin shops is explained in ten words. Pawnbrokers and keepers of gin-shops depend on

the common people: the common people are distressed, that is, they find it hard to live: their distress drives them, first to the pawnbroker and then to the gin-shop; they pawn their goods to purchase—what? poison: yes, in the long run, but for the moment oblivion of their misery. Misery to the common people is wealth to pawnbrokers and keepers of gin-shops. The common people are very miserable; therefore the demand for gin is very great; therefore the profits of selling gin are very high; therefore gin-shops increase.

This conclusion is supported by some who take pains to know the sentiments of the common people, and who earnestly advise them to abstain from gin; I mean members of the Temperance Societies, quakers for the most part, diligent in works of benevolence, gentle, patient, persevering, not proud, but feeling with the poor as well as for them. These, addressing the common people in friendly and common language, say—"Believe us, it is a mistake to suppose that gin will keep the cold out of your stomach. The more gin you drink, the more will you feel cold in your stomach. What warms you to day will not have that effect a month hence: by and by, in order to feel warm, you must double the quantity. But twice the quantity, as soon as you are used to it, will not make you feel warm. The more you drink, the more you must drink in order to feel warm. At last, no quantity will warm you;

your stomach will be destroyed, and you will die of drinking gin to keep the cold out of your stomach." This is all very true; and it shows how well the quakers understand those feelings of the common people which lead to dram-drinking. Cold in the stomach! but neither the Spitalfields weavers, nor their friends of the Temperance Societies, suppose that cold is matter which enters the stomach. Cold in the stomach is a figurative expression, meaning either hunger or despair, or both. "Sir," says a Spitalfields weaver, in reply to his friendly adviser, "all that you say is true. The more gin we drink, the more we want; but also the less we drink gin, the more we feel the want of something else. Give us bread, meat, beer and fire; then we should feel warm without gin. I am not begging: we are all ready to work. I work, God knows, morning, noon and night: work, work, work; we have plenty of that. If we did not work we should die outright. But what does our work bring? work and hunger, work and cold, work and sorrow. I get about fourteen shillings a week, out of which there's rent to pay—we can't lie in the street,—and clothes to find, such as they are,—but we must be covered;—what remains for fire and food amongst six of us, four children, their mother and me? Enough to starve upon, and that is all. The children cry for bread; they must wait: their mother cries because they cry; she is sick

with crying and what not and wants some tea; she must want. In cold weather we all shiver for want of fire: the children and their mother may lie in bed to keep themselves warm; but I, hungry and cold, must work on. I do work; and when I drink gin, it is to keep myself from going mad. I allow it—my wife drinks gin sometimes, and the children, too, poor things, now and then, to pacify them. If you were as poor as we are, sir, and had to work as hard as I have, without hope, you would be apt to learn that gin is bread, and meat, and fire, and hope, all in one. Without gin, I should not have heart to work, and we must all go to the poor-house; or die, for the poor-house is choke full, and the rates are not paid. We say cold in the stomach; but we mean hunger in the belly and despair in the heart. Gin cures both for a time; but it kills, you say. Well, we can but die, with gin or without; and life such as our's, without gin, is worse than death." Just so: those who frequent gin-shops best know why. The gin-shops in Spitalfields are many and magnificent because the trade of Spitalfields is going to ruin. In other parts of London the poverty of the common people enriches pawnbrokers and keepers of gin-shops. At Manchester, Bolton and Blackburn, the cause of gin-shops is Irish wages. Verily, the life of the bulk of the people of England is worse than death.

In the slave-states of America, a strong, healthy, boy or girl is worth about £50. In London, on the gates of poor-houses, one reads—"Strong, healthy, boys and girls, with the usual fee ; apply within." With, not for, the usual fee : you do not pay the fee to obtain a boy or girl ; but the parish officers pay you for taking one. The usual fee in London is £10 ; so that in America you pay five times as much as you receive in England. To be sure, the boys and girls in London are neither strong nor healthy : the notice on the workhouse gates says that they are both, to invite customers, just as the keepers of gin-shops placard their windows with " mountain dew and cream of the valley." But a little, a very little, care and kindness would make the English children as strong and healthy as young negroes in America. It is not, therefore, the difference of strength which causes the difference of value between young people in Kentucky and young people in London ; nor can it be the difference of colour : on the contrary, one might suppose that a white boy or girl would be worth more than a black one, instead of being, so to speak, worth £10. less than nothing.

Ah, but, says a "respectable" Englishman, the young Americans, who cost £50. each, are born in slavery ; the others are free-born English children. The buyer of an American child can do what he likes with it : the English children are merely bound apprentice for a term of years, and

the parish pays with each of them an apprentice fee, as a recompense to the master for teaching them his trade. The magistrate is a party to all the indentures of apprenticeship; he requires the child's consent; he cancels the bond if the child is ill-treated. English children are protected by our glorious, our inimitable, constitution, which makes no difference between rich and poor: it is absurd to compare English apprentices with American slaves.—I answer: it is the whole press of England, not I, that calls English children white slaves; but, not to dispute about words, let us come to facts. In the reign of George III. one Elizabeth Brownrigg was hanged for beating and starving to death her parish apprentices. About three years ago, another woman, Esther Hibner by name, was hanged in London for beating and starving to death a parish apprentice. In both these cases, the constitution, the law, which makes no difference between rich and poor, interfered on behalf of a pauper girl: but when? not before the girl was murdered, but after. Does the law interfere to prevent the murder of parish apprentices?—this is the question. The evidence in the case of Esther Hibner proved, that a number of girls, pauper apprentices, were employed in a workshop; that their victuals consisted of garbage, commonly called hog's wash, and that of this they never had enough to stay the pains of hunger; that they were kept half

naked, half clothed in dirty rags ; that they slept in a heap, on the floor, amidst filth and stench ; that they suffered dreadfully from cold ; that they were forced to work so many hours together that they used to fall asleep while at work ; that for falling asleep, for not working as hard as their mistress wished, they were beaten with sticks, with fists, dragged by the hair, dashed on to the ground, trampled upon, and otherwise tortured ; that they were found, all of them more or less, covered with chilblains, scurvy, bruises and wounds ; that one of them died of ill-treatment ; and,—mark this,—that the discovery of that murder was made in consequence of the number of coffins which had issued from Esther Hibner's premises and raised the curiosity of her neighbours. For this murder Mrs. Hibner was hanged ; but what did she get for all the other murders which, referring to the number of coffins, we have a right to believe that she committed? *She got for each 10*l*. That is to say, whenever she had worked, starved, beaten, dashed and trampled a girl to death, she got another girl to treat in the same way, with 10*l*. for her trouble. She carried on a trade in the murder of parish apprentices ; and if she had conducted it with moderation, if the profit and custom of murder had not made her grasping and careless, the constitution, which protects the poor as well as the rich, would never have interfered with her. The law did not per-

mit her to do what she liked with her apprentices as Americans do with their slaves ; oh no. Those free-born English children were merely bound as apprentices, with their own consent, under the eye of the magistrate, in order that they might learn a trade and become valuable subjects. But did the magistrate ever visit Mrs. Hibner's factory to see how she treated the free-born English girls ? never : did the parish officers ? no : was there any legal provision for the discovery of the woman's trade in murder ? none. That woman has not traded in murder during the last three years ; but why not ? because she was hanged three years ago : but what hanged her ? the glorious constitution or the number of coffins ? Plainly, the number of coffins ; that is, the impunity, the security, with which she had murdered ; the forlorn state of her apprentices ; the utter neglect of them by parish officers, magistrates, laws and constitution.

Since Mrs. Hibner was hanged the inimitable constitution has been greatly altered, but not with respect to parish apprentices. You still read on the gates of London poor-houses " strong, healthy, boys and girls, &c." ; and boys or girls you may obtain by applying within, as many as you please, free-born, with the usual fee. Having been paid for taking them, and having gone through the ceremonies of asking their consent and signing bonds before a magistrate, you may

make them into sausages, for anything the constitution will do to prevent you. If it should be proved that you kill even one of them, you will be hanged; but you may half-starve them, beat them, torture them, anything short of killing them, with perfect security; and using a little circumspection, you may kill them too without much danger. Suppose they die, who cares? their parents? they are orphans, or have been abandoned by their parents. The parish-officers? very likely indeed, that these, when the poor-house is crammed with orphan and destitute children, should make enquiries troublesome to themselves; enquiries which, being troublesome to you, might deprive them of your custom in future. The magistrate? he asked the child whether it consented to be your apprentice; the child said "yes, your worship;" and there his worship's duty ends. The neighbours? of course, if you raise their curiosity like Esther Hibner, but not otherwise. In order to be quite safe, I tell you, you must be a little circumspect. But let us suppose that you are timid, and would drive a good trade without the shadow of risk. In that case, half-starve your apprentices, cuff them, kick them, torment them till they run away from you. They will not go back to the poor-house, because there they would be flogged for having run away from you: besides the poor-house is any thing but a pleasant place. The boys will turn beggars or

thieves, and the girls prostitutes : you will have pocketed 10*l.* for each of them, and may get more boys and girls on the same terms, to treat in the same way. This trade is as safe as it is profitable.

In England there are many charitable institutions for assisting orphan and destitute children. One of them, at the head of which I observe the name of Lord Grosvenor, informs the public that London contains, at all times, 15,000 orphan or destitute children, houseless, prowling about the streets, and supported by begging or robbing. By dint of zeal, advertisements and public meetings, this society has, I believe, found means to provide for 20 of these children. Of the 14,980 which remain, how many are run-away parish apprentices? A committee of parliament might easily learn ; but parliament represents only the payers of poors-rates, to whom an exposure of the truth would not be agreeable. Great things, however, are expected of the reformed house of commons. Should they wish for information on this subject, I hereby undertake to put them in the way of learning, for certain, that one-fourth, at least, of the boys under fourteen years of age, who pass through the prisons of London, are run-away parish apprentices.

The American reader must not suppose that London is the only place in England, where free-born boys and girls may be obtained with the

usual fee of 10*l.* for each. In all great towns the parishes get rid of destitute children in this manner ; and in most of them the usual fee is 10*l.* for each child. In rural parishes the usual fee is from 5*l.* to 7*l.* ; a difference explained by the smaller proportion which in rural parishes destitute children bear to the rates, whence less anxiety on the part of the rural overseer to get rid of destitute children.

In all England there cannot be less than five millions of chimneys. Suppose that on the average each chimney is swept twice a year, and that a fifth of the whole number are swept by machinery. If so, something like what I am going to describe occurs eight million times every year in England. A chimney requires to be swept, and the master sweep attends, with a little boy. He fastens a blanket across the fire place to prevent any soot from falling into the room. * Now watch the child. Trembling, he draws a black bag over his head and shoulders ; the master grasps him by the arm and guides him to the fire place ; he disappears up the chimney. Now watch the master. He is motionless, his head on one side, listening attentively. Ask him a question : “ hush ” is the answer, with his finger on his lips. Presently, a low, indistinct moaning is heard in the chimney. “ William,” says the master, putting his mouth to the edge of the fire place, and speaking in a brisk cheerful tone,—“ that’s right, William.” Another

moan ; and then—" I say William—brush it well out, I say." Down comes a quantity of soot, and the child is heard scraping the sides of the chimney. Presently, silence ; and then moaning again. " William," exclaims the master, " I say, Bill, you've almost done ha'nt you ?" No answer ; the child's head being, remember, in a thick bag ; but the brush is heard once more, and the master holds his tongue. Silence again ; and the moan of the child returns. This time the master shouts—" Bill, Bill, I say, Billy, how do you get on ;" and so on till the end of the work ; whenever the child cries, or is silent, his master shouts to him " Billy, I say Billy, my lad." This is a mild case, without oaths, threats or blows. Ask the master why he tormented the half-smothered boy by speaking to him whilst his head was in the bag up the chimney : he will say—" for no reason that I know of." Believing this answer to be false, you press for another, when the master says—" We always speak to 'em, when they're up the chimney, for fear they should run sulky and stick." Run sulky and stick ! droop, faint, and die of suffocation. Examine the boy when he comes from the chimney. If his knees and elbows are not raw and bloody, they are covered with horn like the knees of the mountain goat ; his face, neck, and breast are wet with the water that flowed from his eyes, which are red with inflammation ; the veins of his temples are swoln into cords ; and

his pulse is at high fever mark. In a word, he has been tortured.

Every climbing-boy suffers great pain every time he mounts a chimney; and a good half of the climbing-boys in England are parish apprentices, free-born, consenting, recognized by the constitution, engaged in learning a trade which, as men, they could not follow, if by chance they should grow to be men. Of those parish apprentices who become thieves, a great many have first been climbing-boys, tortured several times a day as long as they would bear it. This, also, with the power to examine unwilling witnesses, might be abundantly proved.

In England, any one who belongs to the ruling class may be irreligious and immoral without so much punishment as disgrace. The titled concubines of royalty have been envied by numbers of their sex, and honoured when they appeared in public; a lord high chancellor, who keeps the king's conscience, may also keep a mistress, or more than one, without incurring the slightest odium; any man of fortune may change from prostitute to prostitute without forfeiting any of the high respect which is paid to him as a man of fortune: no one, in short, suffers anything by encouraging prostitution, provided he can afford the expense. Women, on the contrary, whose poverty drives them to sin against religion and morality—prostitutes for bread—are regarded

with that sort of scorn, which a Turk expresses when he says—"dog of a christian!" The English show profound respect for their devil, in comparison with the way in which they treat their women of the town. For these, such epithets as wicked, vile, nasty, such terms as slut, strumpet, wretch, are too good: you must not mention them at all in public, and you cannot allude to them in a book without staining your pages. Recommend that they should be treated like fellow creatures, as in the Netherlands: if you are not prosecuted for blasphemy, many will say that you deserve to be hanged. In America or Holland, if you strike a woman of this class, she will take the law of you: in England, her evidence might be rejected, or at all events, would not be believed. "Gentlemen of the jury," the counsel of the accused would say, "this charge rests on the evidence of a common" (meaning poor) "prostitute: faugh! my res—pec—table" (rich) "client is already acquitted." I do not pretend that such a speech was ever made, but assert, admitting the hypothesis to be absurd, that if, by chance, a respectable Englishman were prosecuted for assaulting a woman of the town, then this would be the way to get him acquitted. The English constitution recognizes parish apprentices, but not poor prostitutes. Prostitution is one thing; the prostitutes another. The laws and customs of England encourage prostitution, but do not

even protect the prostitutes. At the royal theatres, for instance, which are managed by the king's servants, there are grand saloons, built expressly for the encouragement of prostitution ; but I cannot hear of any law or regulation, like those which subsist in France and Holland, intended to provide for the health, the personal security, and the decent behaviour of this unfortunate class. The laws and customs of England conspire to sink this class of Englishwomen into a state of vice and misery below that which necessarily belongs to their condition. Hence their extreme degradation, their troopers' oaths, their love of gin, their desperate recklessness, and the shortness of their miserable lives.

But how, considering the very great mortality to which they are subject, shall we account for their vast numerical proportion to the other inhabitants of England? In France, and more especially in Holland, women of the town are frequently reformed, married, and respected in their new condition. In England, where the mere idea of a reclaimed prostitute, married and respected, would shock the least fastidious, prostitution means speedy death. English women of this class, or rather girls, for few of them live to be women, die like sheep with the rot ; so fast that soon there would be none left, if a fresh supply were not obtained equal to the number of deaths. But a fresh supply is always obtained

without the least trouble : seduction easily keeps pace with prostitution or mortality. Those who die are, like factory children that die, instantly succeeded by new competitors for misery and death. One cannot prove, indeed, by statistical tables, that the proportion of girls of the town is greater in England than in other countries, because in England any deliberate enquiry concerning this class would be considered shameful ; nor are statistical tables required : the fact speaks for itself, is proved by the swarms of prostitutes to be met with in every town, and in every quarter of the great towns. To prove this, statistical tables are not more necessary than to establish, what no one denies, that in England there are more splendid mansions and gin-shops than in any other country. But the cause ; what is the cause of this excessive number of prostitutes, notwithstanding so wonderful a rate of mortality ?

One cause of this evil is, of course, an excessive demand for prostitutes. That demand is occasioned principally by a custom now prevalent amongst the English middle classes ; the custom of abstaining from marriage, the custom of celibacy, vulgarly speaking ; of “ moral restraint,” in the language of political economy. This cause is explained in the next note : the other causes, the inducements to a life of prostitution, are explained by the following story.

Some out-of-the-way people founded a refuge for prostitutes ; a charity of which the object was to reclaim a small number of public women. One day a girl applied for admission to this retreat, saying—" I am out of work, cold, hungry, tired, houseless, and anxious to be saved from evil courses." She was dismissed not being qualified : so the story goes. This story may not be true ; but most Englishmen have laughed at it in private. The story passes for a good joke ; and its currency proves two things ; first, that the few English with bowels of compassion for prostitutes are ridiculed as eccentric ; and next, that the English themselves consider poverty the main inducement to a life of prostitution. In America, where no class practises " moral restraint," the demand for women of the town is very small, and, such as it is, arises principally from the sojourn of foreigners in sea-port towns ; but if that demand were doubled by a sufficient increase of foreign visitors, it would not be supplied ; because in America every girl can readily obtain an honest livelihood. In America, you may travel a thousand miles, taking the towns in your way, and not meet a prostitute : in England, you cannot walk a mile upon pavement without meeting hundreds. In America, it is as difficult for householders to get women-servants, as in England for women-servants to get places. In America, prostitution is a choice seldom made ; to Eng-

lishwomen, thousands every year, it is a dire necessity. In order to reclaim the prostitutes of England, you must first find employment for them, which would be the harder task of the two ; and by when this was done, there would be as many as before. Not vice and misery, Mr. Malthus, but misery and vice is the order of checks to population. Charity, virtue, happiness! these are English words still, but the meaning of them appears to have settled in America. I wonder that emigration is not more the fashion, and wish that Mrs. Trollope would write a book on the domestic manners of the English.

In England the increase of crime is a common subject of lamentation. About a hundred and twenty thousand of the people, it is reckoned, are always in jail ; besides convicts, transported to comfort by way of punishment, and debtors looking through prison bars for the means of paying their creditors. In England the increase of fine jails is nearly as striking as the increase of gin-shops. The new jails, one in every county, and in some counties several, would be thought grand in America ; noble buildings of beautiful brick work or handsome masonry, with imposing fronts, bearing chains, emblematical, carved in stone. In Lancashire the magistrates boast, that their county jail is very like Windsor Castle, the finest of palaces. The increase of fine lunatic asylums, also, may be noticed here ; since it has been

lately ascertained that there are more mad paupers, in proportion, than mad people of any other class, except governesses. Poor-houses, gin-shops, mad-houses, jails ; one almost sees them grow in number and magnificence, with the increase of paupers, parish apprentices, drunkenness and crime. In England, those who compose the bulk of the people are too cheap to be happy. If their condition be such that it must be worse before it can be better, the crisis is coming.

NOTE III.

UNEASINESS OF THE MIDDLE CLASS.

Who compose the aristocracy—particular distresses of the middle class—uneasiness of farmers—of manufacturers—of dealers—low profits—uneasiness of professional men—of several classes possessing the common run of knowledge, or superior knowledge—of persons having fixed incomes and families—primary cause of prostitution—domestic life amongst the English middle class.

IN America, it is a common mistake to suppose, that the English aristocracy consists entirely of the nobility, squires of good estate, wealthy churchmen and highly paid public servants. The aristocracy means the privileged class. Except the privilege of being born to make laws, there is none in England that money will fail to procure ; and even that one, any man, having abundance of money, may obtain for his unborn, first-born son. A judge, a bishop, or a secretary of state, does not consider the trouble of his vocation a privilege ; his privileges consist of money, patronage, power ; the respect, the adulation, the devotion of his inferiors. In England, with plenty

of the first of these privileges, you have all the others in abundance. Any Englishman, being very rich, would find it hard, if such a whim should take him, to avoid the respect, the adulation, the devotion, of numerous parasites. Not the man, but the wealth, is worshipped. The man may be ignorant, stupid, selfish, dishonest, in every way worthless ; but if he have £50,000. a year, he will have fifty, nay, five hundred, devoted friends, telling him continually that he is wise, just, generous, all over noble. Poor lords, though of Norman descent, are very little esteemed, and would be quite despised, but that as hereditary legislators they commonly obtain a good deal of the public money. The money is given to them avowedly for the purpose of maintaining their dignity. On the other hand, money will purchase the reputation of Norman descent. Mr. Thistlethwaite, whose father wore wooden shoes and made a million by cotton spinning ; Mr. Thistlethwaite, who has purchased a mansion called Thistlethwaite Hall, intends, when he obtains a peerage, to take the title of Thistlethwaite and Vermont (his mother's name was Greenhill), in order to make it be believed that he descends in the female line from the Norman lords of Vermont : and this will be believed, religiously, on account of the million of money. In short, there is nothing that the English will not do to please him who can dispose of a great deal of money,

either his own or that of the public. All rich Englishmen, therefore, belong to the aristocracy quite as much as any duke, minister or archbishop ; not excluding tradesmen, provided they be called great, like Calvert the great brewer, Baring the great stockjobber, Crawshay the great iron-founder, Mellish the great butcher, and Morrison the great draper. Still, one cannot draw a very distinct line between the aristocracy and the class next below them. I thought at one time of counting amongst the aristocracy all who are called respectable ; but respectability has various meanings in England : with some it means to keep a carriage, with others a gig. I have it—the privileged class consists of those who, whenever they are wronged, or would injure, can buy law without depriving themselves of any other costly luxury ; those, in short, who, be their rank what it may, have more money than they know how to spend. Captain Basil Hall calls them the Spending Class.

After these comes the middle or uneasy class. Uneasiness, according to Johnson, is care, trouble, perplexity. By the uneasy class, I mean those who, not being labourers, suffer from agricultural distress, manufacturing distress, commercial distress, distress of the shipping interest, and many more kinds of distress, of which the names and descriptions have appeared over and over again during the last fifteen years, in the

journals of parliament, in pamphlets without number, and in all political publications, quarterly, monthly, weekly and daily. In English politics, the word distress is used more frequently than any other comprehensive word, except pauperism. Distress, applied to any particular class, signifies the trouble, care, perplexity of that class, but not that the trouble, care and perplexity are unequal, or confined to any one set of people; for each distress has lasted fifteen years, and all the distresses together make permanent general distress. This steady national distress is attributed to causes more numerous than the several distresses of which it is composed; to transition from war to peace; to the admission of foreign corn; to restrictions on the admission of foreign corn; to taxation; to diminution of the public expenditure; to inadequate production; to overproduction; to change in the currency; to free trade, and restrictions on trade; to political economy, and the blunders of practical men; and, finally, to rotten boroughs. For an evil attributed to so many causes, it was natural that numerous methods of cure should be proposed. Accordingly, the business of English politicians for about fifteen years, has been to devise remedies for general distress or particular distresses. Some of these specifics will be noticed hereafter, and especially reform of parliament, from which the uneasy class expect the most happy results;

but here the many alleged causes, and supposed remedies, of distress are alluded to, merely with a view to show that the distress itself is real, extensive, severe, not imaginary, as some of the spending class assert, nor confined, as in former periods, to the idle and thriftless. In fact, the uneasy class consists of three-fourths, or rather perhaps nine-tenths, of all who are engaged in trades and professions, as well as all who, not being very rich, intend that their children should follow some industrious pursuit. The proof of this assertion is very easy.

There are some English farmers, though but few, so rich as to be called great; and these do not belong to the uneasy class. Even these, however, complain of low profits. But if he whose farming capital is, say, 30,000*l.*, grumbles because his annual profit is only two and a-half per cent, or 750*l.*, what must be the state of that farmer whose capital is only 5,000*l.*? Supposing his profits to be equal to those of the great farmer, his annual income is only 125*l.*; not so much, allowing for the difference of prices, as the income of a common labourer in America. Any where in America, a farming capital of 5,000*l.* would return a profit of fifteen per cent.; so that taking the common rate of farming profit in England to be two and a-half per cent., the American farmer possessing 5,000*l.* enjoys an income, equal to that of the English farmer possessing 30,000*l.*

But the common rate of farming profit in England, during the last fifteen years, has not been so much as two and a-half per cent. : on the contrary, the rate of loss has been considerable. Impossible ! cries a bigoted political economist ; that is impossible, because if farming profits had sunk very low, capital would have been withdrawn from agriculture, and employed in other pursuits of which the profits were higher. But what if the profits of other pursuits were not higher ? Political economists frequently suppose the case of low profits in a particular trade : surely, what takes place in one trade, may take place in all. But be this as it may, there can be no doubt that in England of late years, many farmers have employed capital with a high rate of loss. Hundreds, thousands, have lost their whole capital, whilst all, with the exception of those whose capitals were so large that they could save out of very low profits, have lost more or less. The number of farmers, it might be supposed, has been diminished by the total or partial ruin of so many : not at all. A farmer was ruined ; had the landlord any difficulty in letting his farm ? On the contrary, the ruin of a farmer has generally occasioned wonder at the anxiety of other farmers to pay as high or a higher rent for the ruinous farm. Except during a few years before the close of the last war, the competition for English farms was never more keen than it

has been during the long period of agricultural distress. There are very many farms which have ruined two or three tenants since 1815. No one pretends that the rent of farming land is lower, every one knows that it is much higher, reckoned in corn or cattle, than at any former time, except just before the peace ; and at this time high rents are, by some, supposed to be the cause, or at least one cause, of agricultural distress. The distress continues without diminishing the number of people who are distressed. As one farmer is ruined, another takes his place ; but the change of persons, as with children who are worked to death in factories, makes no alteration in the scene. I do not say, that all the farmers, or all farmers who begin with moderate capitals, are ruined in a few years, and succeeded by others to be ruined in like manner , but every year sees the ruin of many farmers of moderate capital, whose places are instantly filled ; and all farmers, except only those who have very large capitals, are constantly on the verge of ruin ; in a state of care, trouble and perplexity.

As in agriculture, so in manufactures ; with this difference, however, that the proportion of great capitals to moderate or small ones being much larger in manufactures than in agriculture, the proportion of manufacturers, who suffer trouble and perplexity, is much less than amongst farmers. There are many manufacturers, each

of whom employs a capital of more than 100,000*l*. These might be content with a low rate of profit: they are discontented, but they are not care-worn, troubled and perplexed, like those smaller capitalists, to whom a low rate of profit brings ruin, or, at least, the constant dread of ruin. The number of manufacturers who have been ruined since the peace, is perhaps, as great as the number of farmers who have been ruined in the same period. But has the amount of capital employed in manufactures decreased? On the contrary, it has increased rapidly and steadily ever since the peace. Has the number of master-manufacturers decreased? On the contrary, it has increased, though in a less proportion than manufacturing capital; this difference being explained by the constantly increasing proportion of large capitals to moderate or small ones. In other words, supposing the whole number of master-manufacturers to have been doubled, the number of those, each of whom employs above 100,000*l*., may have been quadrupled. But how could this be, with a constant and universal low rate of profit? I have endeavoured to answer that question in the next note. Here it must be admitted, that ever since the peace, the common rate of profit in English manufactures has been extremely low; that a great deal of capital has been employed with loss instead of profit, that many of the owners of capital so employed have been ruined,

and that at this time a very low rate of profit condemns all manufacturers of small or moderate capital to uneasiness, trouble, and perplexity. Great manufacturers, who possess immense capitals, must not be counted amongst the uneasy class.

In the commerce of England since the peace, a low rate of profit has produced the same effect as in agriculture and manufactures. Great merchants, merchants who employed very large capitals, have complained of very low profits and frequently of loss; an immense number of merchants, having only small or moderate capitals, have been ruined; and all owners of moderate or small capitals employed in commerce are in a state of uneasiness. In commerce, which admits of more speculation than manufactures or agriculture, the loss of capital has caused uneasiness, and even misery, to numbers who owned very large capitals, and who, impelled by the low rate of profit to seek out new channels of trade, have employed their capitals in glutting distant markets, and been ruined by such speculations. But has the total ruin of these great capitalists, and of a much larger number of small capitalists, diminished the number of merchants or the amount of capital employed in trade? On the contrary, the increase of commercial capital has kept pace with that of manufacturing capital, and the number of merchants with the number of manu-

facturers. Millions, tens of millions, of English capital have been thrown away since the peace in supplying distant markets with goods at less than cost price, and in other speculations, such as working, or pretending to work, the mines of South America ; but whenever capital was in this way abstracted and lost, its place was immediately filled ; or rather so large a waste of capital seems not to have caused even a temporary vacuum. Where all the capital came from, how it was so rapidly accumulated, is a question ; but that commercial capital has been produced faster than it was thrown away, is a plain fact, about which there can be no dispute. The number of merchants, employing large, moderate and small capitals, is very much greater than it was fifteen years ago,* more business is done ; new channels of trade have been opened and filled : yet the profits of commercial business are now so low that only the most wealthy merchants are at ease ; all the others are troubled, perplexed, uneasy, always on the verge of bankruptcy.

With retail dealers, there is the same complaint of low profits, the same uneasiness, as with far-

* In a late debate on "Distress" in the house of commons, (1833) Mr. Grote, member for the city of London, a great capitalist, and a very accomplished gentleman besides, referred to the increase of names in the London Directory as a proof that the number of traders had increased.

mers, manufacturers and merchants. Until of late years most retail trades were conducted by persons of small or moderate capital. Of late years, however, very large capitals have been embarked in several retail trades. The owners of these large capitals act on the maxim—much business with small profits is as good as little business with large profits. They are satisfied, and as each of them possesses a large capital, they may well be satisfied, with low profits. But nothing is better established than the tendency of all capitals, and especially of all capitals employed in the same business, to an equal rate of profit. It was impossible, therefore, that retail dealers of small capital should obtain high profits while great capitalists engaged in the same retail trade were satisfied with low profits. Still, a general low rate of profit in retail trades must not be considered as an effect of the employment of large capitals in retail trade. On the contrary, large capitals have been employed in retail trade, though, first, because the agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial fields were fully occupied, still, secondly, because the fullness of the retail field offered to the great capitalist some advantages over the small one; such advantages as being better able to wait for distant returns, as being able to buy when the market price was low and to sell when it was high. The owners of a large capital can save

when the owners of a small one cannot. The owners of a large capital engaged in retail trade have increased their capitals, notwithstanding a low rate of profit : a low rate of profit has ruined many retail dealers of moderate or small capital, and at this moment condemns all such dealers to great uneasiness. In London, and throughout England, retail dealers of moderate or small capital complain of dulness of trade, stagnation of trade, and so forth. Do they buy and sell less than formerly? on the contrary, except in special cases, which fall out of the general rule and might be explained by some special circumstances, they do more business than formerly : the profit, not the business, is less. And further, more of them do business : in all towns without exception the number of retail dealers is greater than it was at the close of the war ; and in most towns the increase of retail dealers has kept pace with that striking increase of houses which has been noticed before. As in manufactures and in wholesale trade, so in retail business, the number of persons who suffer trouble and perplexity has greatly increased with the uneasiness occasioned by a low rate of profit.

How a low rate of profit renders the middle class uneasy, I will now try to explain.

The rate of interest is a pretty sure criterion of the rate of profit. During the last war the rate of interest was very high. The lenders and bor-

rowers of money practised numerous tricks for evading the usury laws. One trick, practised by noblemen who borrowed large sums, was to give the lender a seat in parliament besides legal interest. Ever since the peace, the common rate of interest has remained below five per cent. Four per cent. has been a common rate for large sums, which the borrowers were entitled to hold for a fixed number of years. In other cases, where the lenders exacted repayment within a short period, three per cent., two-and-a-half per cent., and at times even two per cent., has been the ordinary rate of interest. Now let us suppose, though merely for the sake of illustration, that during the war the ordinary rate of profit was twenty per cent. and that since the peace it has been five per cent. If so, during the war, which lasted near thirty years, the income of him who employed a capital of 10,000*l.* was 2,000*l.* a year, and has been, since the peace, 500*l.* a year; if so, the incomes derived from all capitals have, since the peace, been only one quarter of what they were during the war. It would follow, that the means of every man engaged in business, agricultural, manufacturing, or commercial, wholesale or retail, his means of existence, of supporting his family, of educating and establishing his children, and, above all, of contending against unfavourable accidents, such as bad seasons, changes of fashion, and the bankruptcy of his debtors; his

power for doing all these things, has been less by three quarters since the common rate of profit was five per cent., than when twenty per cent. was the common rate of profit. The difference may be more or less than from twenty to five per cent. ; at all events, it is very considerable. But with a smaller power for doing certain things, as large, or a larger, power has been required. In every branch and rank of industry, every one conceives that a certain expenditure is necessary to maintain his rank, or as he might call it, his respectability. The amount of expenditure which makes an Englishman respectable, in whatever condition or rank, has not been much less since the peace than during the war ; the education of children has not been much cheaper, while the desire to give children an expensive education has greatly increased ; the desire or obligation to establish children in the world is the same as before, while the difficulty of accomplishing that object is much greater, since beginners in trade require a much larger capital than formerly to obtain the same income as formerly ; unfavourable accidents happen as before, while bankruptcies complete or partial are more frequent than ever. All those, therefore, whose incomes are derived from the employment of capital, except great capitalists who can easily save out of diminished incomes, have smaller means of meeting heavier calls. Their existence is a continued struggle with difficulties. How to make the two ends meet, which

way to turn, how to provide for one claim without neglecting another, how to escape ruin or at least what they consider degradation, how on earth to manage for their children ; these are the thoughts which trouble and perplex them. The anxious, vexed, or harrassed class, would be a better name for them than the milder term which I have used. These are the people who in classes, or altogether, keep up the cries of agricultural distress, manufacturing distress, commercial distress, distress of trade, and national distress.

Distress is not confined to those who employ a material capital. The learning, skill and reputation, united, of a professional man may be called his capital. Great professional capitalists, those who possess all at once great skill, great learning and a high reputation, still make large incomes : but none of those, whose learning or skill or reputation is small, make enough to live upon. The very high prizes of the bar and the church have always led to a keen competition in these professions ; so that at all times there has been a large proportion of barristers without briefs, and of clergymen eager to obtain a miserable curacy ; but at this time the proportion of briefless barristers is greater than ever, as well as the number of clergymen eager to be curates. And, at this time, not only the bar and the established church are crowded with hungry competitors, but also every dissenting church, the attorney's branch of law, and all the branches of the medical and sur-

gical professions. Nay, full, overflowing, as are all these professions, the number of young people who hope to live by them is far greater than ever : witness the crowds of students in the inns of court, of young men every year admitted to practice as attornies, of clerical students in the universities and dissenting schools, and of students in the schools of medicine and surgery. It seems impossible that a third of them should ever live by the pursuits which they intend to follow ; for even now two thirds of the persons engaged in those careers live by snatching the bread out of each other's mouths. Two-thirds, therefore, at the very least, of professional men may be reckoned amongst the uneasy class.

To these must be added a swarm of engineers, architects, painters, surveyors, brokers, agents, paid writers, keepers of schools, tutors, governesses and clerks. The occupations of some of these classes permit the employment of a material capital. Engineers, for example, or architects, who employ a material capital, must be excluded from this list ; since whatever has been said of farmers, manufacturers and merchants, applies to them. Such of them as employ a large capital increase their fortunes with small profits ; such of ~~them~~ as employ a small or moderate capital live in trouble and vexation. ~~Some~~ few also must be taken out of this list, who, without employing a material capital, are distinguished for learning,

skill and reputation, united. There are some painters, now and then there is a paid writer, who make large incomes ; but the great mass of these two classes, those who supply the ordinary, one may say the necessary, demand for pictures and composition, are miserably poor. But was not this always the case ? Without a doubt ; the poverty of painters and authors is proverbial ; moreover there can be no doubt, that the aggregate of money earned by English painters and authors since the peace has been very much greater than during any former period of equal length ; but during the last fifteen years the proportion of poor painters and authors has greatly increased ; and never was it so great as at this moment. Since the invention of printing and the general spread of education, the common run of knowledge has always been held cheap ; but now, in England, it is the cheapest of all commodities, except Irish manual labour. It is not, however, the smallness of the incomes earned by a swarm of educated people that strikes one so much, as the vast number of competitors for those very small incomes ; the hungry crowd of expectants watching to oust the beggarly crowd in possession. What condition of life is more detestable than that of an English governess ? In England, where poverty is a crime, governesses, young, beautiful, well-informed, virtuous, and, from the contradiction between their poverty and

their intrinsic merit, peculiarly susceptible, are generally treated as criminals ; imprisoned, set to hard labour, cruelly mortified by the parents and visitors, worried by the children, insulted by the servants ; and all for what ? for butler's wages. Yet take up any London newspaper, any day in the year, and you shall find in it a string of advertisements for the hateful situation of governess. There is an institution in England, of which the object is, to provide for decayed governesses, by means of a small yearly subscription from those who are not yet worn out ; and the title of this benefit club is the "governesses' mutual *assurance* society." Last year, a newspaper, which is read principally by the aristocracy, by Captain Hall's spending class, noticing the club in question, proposed that it should be called "the governesses' mutual *impudence* society." This blackguard joke was uttered, to please whom ? the readers of the newspaper in which it appeared ; a class who employ governesses, a class to whom, in that very newspaper, numerous advertisements for the situation of governess are continually addressed. An eminent English physician, whose wife had been a governess, states that, of the inmates of mad-houses, the largest proportion consists of women who have been governesses. Yet for this dreadful and shabbily-paid office of governess, there are, judging from the newspapers, more candidates, in proportion to places, than for any other

disagreeable employment: not, however, that one observes any lack of candidates for other subordinate employments which require the common run of knowledge, or even superior knowledge. They talk much in England of superabundance of labourers, meaning, common workmen; but these are not more redundant than governesses, keepers of schools and clerks of every description.

Superabundance is a relative term. Considering the superabundance of capitalists, in proportion to the means of employing capital with profit, and of professional men in proportion to the demand for their services, there is a reason why, of necessity, the subordinate classes should be redundant: because the fields for the employment of capital in agriculture, manufactures and trade, and for the employment of professional learning and skill, being quite full, there is no room in those fields for the progeny of the subordinate classes; while the grown up children of capitalists and professional men, who are either ruined, or can but just make the two ends meet, instead of following the careers of their fathers, increase the competition for subordinate employments. But is there less room for the subordinate classes, than there was fifteen years ago? Positively, no; relatively, yes. Subordinate employments are far more numerous than they were fifteen years ago; but then, throughout the fifteen

years, the classes wanting subordinate employments have increased more rapidly than the demand for their services. Suppose the field to have been doubled, the cultivators have been quadrupled : with a greater field than ever, never was there such a want of room.

Amongst the uneasy class must be included, finally, a large body of people whose incomes are fixed, whose means of existence are not subject to the rate of profit or the demand for professional and subordinate services, — landowners, sinecurists, public servants, and owners of government stock. Great landowners, great sinecurists, highly paid public servants, and great stockholders, belong to the spending class, together with great farmers, manufacturers, merchants, tradesmen and lawyers. The owner of 10,000 acres of land, lord Ellenborough with a patent income of 10,000*l.* a year, the lord Chancellor with an income lately cut down to 14,000*l.* a year, or the stockholder who receives 5,000. or even 2,000. a year in regular half-yearly payments at the bank, has no reason to complain of distress. Nor indeed has any one, apparently, whose income was fixed during the war, and has been much increased by an alteration in the value of money. Nevertheless, many thousands of people, enjoying fixed incomes, suffer deep anxiety ; anxiety caused by the distress of those classes whose incomes are not fixed: I mean

landowners, sinecurists, public servants and fund-owners, whose fixed incomes are not large, and *who have children to provide for*. What is to become of the sons and the daughters? No man likes that his son should fall, or his daughter marry, into a circle much inferior to his own; especially in England, where this sort of degradation, like absolute poverty, is disgraceful, if not criminal. Every Englishman of property, moreover, likes that his eldest son should inherit nearly the whole of his property. What then, when there is property, must become of the younger sons and the daughters? What of all the children, where the property is only for life? The father must save: good; but the moment he proceeds to invest his savings, he feels the low rate of profit and interest. During the war he could, with a little management, have obtained ten, twelve, perhaps fifteen per cent. for his money: now, no one pays five per cent. with good security. He consults his banker as to the best mode of investment. "Upon my word," says the latter, "I cannot advise you: the funds are so high, and so likely to fall through political agitation, there is so much money with so much distress and discontent, that we know not what to do with our money. I have 100,000*l.* in that drawer; and if you will tell me of a better place for it, I shall be very much obliged to you."* He

* "In the money market, the greatest torpor and want of

is troubled, therefore, to fix on a mode of investment, and when the choice is made, annoyed because the interest is so low. But he cannot save enough to prevent the degradation of his children, without incurring degradation himself; without losing caste by a great diminution of expenditure. His savings, therefore, when invested in the best way, that is, in an insurance of his life, whereby he reaps the benefit of low profits in the shape of a low premium, are but just sufficient to provide a maintenance for his wife and children after his death. What are the sons to do when grown up, if grown up? The army?—pay for a commission; and then, unless you belong to the spending class, look on promotion as hopeless. In the navy, candidates for promotion are quite as redundant as in the army. The church?—buy a living, or else your

enterprise prevail. There has probably never existed a period at which so little employment for capital, at once safe and profitable, has presented itself; and it is quite evident, that unless some change takes place, capitalists are on the point of being forced into some wild and dangerous schemes, that must be attended with ultimate loss, by the mere impatience of letting their money lie idle. Whatever the cause of the low rate of interest may be, reflecting men look at it with much alarm, especially as it has now been of long continuance; and if some legitimate employment for capital does not soon offer, we may expect soon to see a new influx of foreign loans and joint-stock schemes." *City Article of the Times. October 10th, 1832.*

son must struggle, and may struggle in vain too, with a host of needy competitors for miserable curacies. The law, medicine, trade?—all full, overflowing; while the last, whether agricultural, manufacturing or commercial, requires a large capital, or it will bring uneasiness, perhaps bankruptcy. A place under government?—yes, perhaps, if you are the parasite of a great man. I say perhaps, because the class of parasites wanting places has greatly increased of late, like all the other classes, while the number of places is become somewhat less. At best, your son will obtain but a small place; all the great ones, both at home and in the colonies, being kept for young people of the spending class. At any rate, the pain of being a parasite, brings you within the uneasy class. There was a way, indeed, by which a man of moderate or small income could obtain places for his sons without cringing to any one; by connecting himself with a rotten borough, as alderman, bailiff, returning officer or crier; but the glory of rotten boroughs has passed away; and, if reform should go no further, only the spending class and their parasites will obtain places under government.

But if a man of fixed income, his income being small or moderate, be troubled to provide for his sons, how to provide for his daughters is a more perplexing question. The first, no, the second point, is to get them married; the first point is

to prevent them from marrying into a lower, which commonly means a poorer, rank than that in which they were born. The first point is generally effected during childhood, when every day, and almost every hour of the day, something happens to impress them with a fear of such degradation as attaches to imprudent marriages. The second purpose, being subject to the first, becomes extremely difficult. If the girl had a fortune, she would belong to captain Basil Hall's spending class; we suppose her to have no fortune except beauty, tenderness, modesty and good sense. Who will take her as a wife, that she will take as a husband? She may by chance, or rather her mother may, by dint of great toil and management, catch one of the spending class; but this would be an exception to the general rule. The general rule with the daughters of men of small income, whether fixed or not, is a choice between celibacy and marriage with one of the uneasy class. Now, a great proportion of young men in the uneasy class dread marriage, unless there be fortune in the case, as the surest means of increasing their embarrassment. This is one of the most important features in the social state of England. Amongst the middle class, amongst all classes except the highest and the lowest, "moral restraint" is a confirmed habit. Hence, immorality without a parallel in any other country. This is the cause of that exuberant

prostitution which shocks an American. Another effect of "moral restraint" amongst the middle class is, that a great proportion of the females in that class are doomed to celibacy. One may well say doomed. Custom forbids them to practice that sort of "moral restraint" to which their brothers resort without disgrace; and custom is stronger than walls and bars. In this case, it has more power than the strictest discipline of a convent. But why do the English, Americans, French, Dutch and Germans, regard with horror the legal institution of celibacy? On account of its unnatural cruelty. Well then, in England, a certain state of political economy, pride or prudence, and custom, occasion more unnatural suffering than the villainous theocracies of Italy and Spain. The proportion of English women who pine in celibacy, is far greater than that of Spanish or Italian women who languish in convents; and the Englishwomen suffer more than the others, because, living in the world, they are more in the way of temptation, more cruelly tantalized by their intercourse with happy wives and mothers. There is not in the world a more deplorable sight, than a fine brood of English girls turning into old maids one after the other; first reaching the bloom of beauty, full of health, spirits and tenderness; next striving anxiously, aided by their mother, to become honoured and happy wives; then fretting, growing thin, pale,

listless and cross ; at last, if they do not go mad or die of consumption, seeking consolation in the belief of an approaching millennium, or in the single pursuit of that happiness in another world, which this world has denied to them. The picture may displease, even because it is correct. This, Americans, you whose domestic manners an Englishwoman holds up to the ridicule of her countrywomen ; this is a faithful sketch from domestic life amongst the English middle class.

The misery of the working class of Englishmen, is not, perhaps, at this time much greater in degree than at former times, or so great as the misery of the bulk of the people in most other countries, except America. In this respect, the difference between the past and the present seems to be ; first, that with the increase of population there are more people to be miserable, not more in proportion, but more absolutely ; and secondly, that, with the increase of knowledge, one learns all about that misery which was formerly concealed from the happy classes. But the great uneasiness of the middle class in England, is a new state of things ; unexplained, and at first sight unaccountable, if one reflects on the vast and rapidly increasing wealth of the English nation. Competition for wages is, plainly, the immediate cause of misery amongst the working class ; but what occasions that severe competi-

tion amongst people of capital and education, that snatching at each others means of existence, which renders the life of the English middle class one struggle with difficulties ? This question is examined in the following note.

NOTE IV.

COINCIDENCE OF OVERFLOWING NATIONAL WEALTH
WITH THE UNEASINESS AND MISERY OF INDIVIDUALS.

Theories of the English economists—a dream of Robinson Crusoe’s island—the field of production an element of wealth—argument with the economists—argument with the archbishop of Dublin—America and England, as to the field of production—cases of various proportions amongst the elements of production—peculiar case of England—as wealth increases, many individuals are less rich—moral and strictly political effects of the various proportions which the field of production bears to capital and labour—peculiar effects in the peculiar case of England.

ACCORDING to certain theories of the English political economists, it is quite impossible that my account of the wealth, uneasiness and misery, of the English people should be true. Those philosophers would say—If the capital of England be so much greater in proportion to people than that of other countries, wages must be higher in England than elsewhere ;*

* “ Universally then we may affirm that, other things

“wages depend on the proportion between population and capital.”* Again, if the middle class suffered from the low profits of stock, the labouring class would enjoy high wages; and if the labouring class suffered from low wages, the capital of the middle class would yield high profits; since “the profits of stock depend upon wages, rise as wages fall, and fall as wages rise.”†‡ This is called reasoning *à priori*, and though very sound and profound, no doubt, to those who understand it, is sadly puzzling to common intellects. Let us try, however, to make it out.

The English people have accumulated a far greater capital than the same number of people ever possessed, or dreamed of possessing, since the world began: they have so much capital that

remaining the same, if the ratio which capital and population bear to one another remains the same, wages will remain the same; if the ratio which capital bears to population increases, wages will rise; if the ratio which population bears to capital increases, wages will fall. From this law, clearly understood, it is easy to trace the circumstances which, in any country, determine the condition of the great body of the people.” *Mill's Elements of Political Economy*, page 44, 3rd edit.

* *Mill's Elements of Political Economy*, Section *Wages*, p. 41, 3d edit.

† *Mills' Elements*, Section *Profits*, p. 71, 3d edit.

‡ “It must at once be seen,” says Mr. Ricardo, that “profits would be high or low, exactly as wages were low or high. * * * * There could be no rise in the value of labour, without a fall of profits.”

they know not what to do with it: though during the last half century they have squandered, wasted, utterly thrown away, more capital than most nations possess, they still possess more capital than they ever possessed before. Abundance of capital, in proportion to people, always produces high wages. Therefore, wages are much higher in England than they ever were amongst any other people, or at any previous time amongst the English people. Aristotle would not have quarrelled with the syllogism, and that great logician and economist, the archbishop of Dublin, will find no fault in it, logically speaking. But there must be an error somewhere, since the conclusion is directly at variance with a known fact. Let us try again.

1. When capital is less in proportion to people, wages are lower ;
2. The proportion of capital to people, is far less in America than in England ;
3. Therefore, wages are far lower in America than in England.

The logic is still good ; but the conclusion is again directly at variance with a known truth ; the fact being, that wages are far higher in America than in England. Wherein lies the error ? in one of the propositions, but in which of them, my lord ? I put the question to the archbishop, and to Mr. Mill, who, like his grace, is a great economist and logician.

Now for the question of profits ; according to the economists.

1. When profits are high, wages are low ;
2. In America, profits are very high ;
3. Therefore, in America, wages are very low.

Again,—

1. When wages are low, profits are high ;
2. Wages are very high in America ;
3. Therefore, profits are very low in America.

Or thus,—

1. When profits are low, wages are high ;
2. In England, profits are very low ;
3. Therefore, in England, wages are very high.

And again,—

1. When wages are low, profits are high ;
2. Wages are very low in England ;
3. Therefore, in England, profits are very high.

Deuce take the conclusion ! it always comes wrong, which ever way one looks for it. I had been puzzling myself to get over a difficulty in political-economy by means of logic, when growing more and more confused, I at last had the good luck to fall asleep. Good luck, I say, because during my sleep I had a dream, which explained to me why profits and wages, both together, are so low in England and so high in America. This was my dream :—

I was shipwrecked and cast into the sea. I heard the shrieks of my shipmates who were drowning, and felt the pain of having my own

head struck against a rock. My next impression was less disagreeable. I found myself alone, but quite well, in Robinson Crusoe's island, walking up the green slope from the creek to the cave. Robinson came out by his ladder to meet me, and said with a smile—"Welcome! countryman." For my part, I embraced him tenderly, as an old and very dear friend. Presently, Friday ran up to us, and though he made me laugh by bowing very low and kicking up his legs, backwards, one after the other, expressing respect and joy at the same time, still I could not help shaking hands with him also, the faithful creature. Robinson asked me to take something after my voyage; but I, not to be behind him in politeness, seeing that he was in a hurry to show me all his fine things, said—"Not at present, thank you; I should like to see your improvements." Hereupon he led me, first to his crops, which had a most creditable appearance; and then within the inclosure, where I admired his goats, the tools which had cost him so much trouble, and the great store of provisions and seeds which he had laid up. At length, we sat down to a very respectable dinner of fish and roasted kid; chatting as follows during the meal.

Dreamer.—"Altogether, Mr. Crusoe, you seem quite at your ease."

Robinson.—"Why, yes, blessed be God! but I have had my trials. It was a sore trial when I was obliged to sow the seed that I would fain have

eaten, and when I had no Friday to help me ; but I have been very comfortable since I got before the world, with a good stock of seeds, tools and goats : nay, since I lighted on Friday, I have lived like a gentleman, quite at my ease, as you say."

D. " You are a capitalist now, Robinson ?"

R. " Capitalist ! what is that ?"

D. " Why, seeds, tools and goats, are capital, and as you possess these you are a capitalist. Friday works : you direct him, and give him a share of the produce : Friday is a labourer."

R. " A labourer ! yes, he works ; a share ! he takes what he pleases."

D. " Of course, high wages of labour, eh ; and high profits of stock also, or you would not be so much at your ease, Mr. Robinson Crusoe."

R. " I have forgotten some of my English. High wages of labour, high profits of stock ! what are they ?"

D. " In this island, high wages mean, that you can let Friday take what he pleases without stinting yourself ; and high profits mean, that Friday takes what he pleases without stinting you. Friday's labour, with the aid of your seeds, tools and goats, produces plenty for both of you."

R. " Yes—but hark ! man Friday ! friend ! down upon your knees ! here's another earthquake !"

And sure enough it was a terrible earthquake ;

for though it hurt none of us and did not last a minute, when we recovered ourselves and passed from the cave, through the inclosure, and over the outer fence, behold, every part of the island was covered with water, except the rock which formed the cave and about half an acre of land in front of us. Robinson and his man knelt again, and returned thanks to God for having preserved our lives ; whilst I stood by, distressed to think of what would become of them with only that half acre of land. Crusoe's calmness and resignation were quite admirable. Rising he embraced Friday, saying—"the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away ; blessed be the name of the Lord !" Poor Friday, however, began to cry ; and I felt disposed to keep him company, when Robinson pointing to the inclosure said—"We have plenty left, food for a year, seed, tools and goats ; capital, sir, I think you called them ?"

"But what," asked I, "is the use of capital without a field to employ it on ? Your goats will be starved, and with no more than this little bit of land you will be unable to use half your tools, or a quarter of your seeds."

Robinson looked rather blank at this, but said—"We must do with less ; there will be less for Friday and less for me, but enough, I hope, to keep us alive."

"Low wages and low profits," said I, "but that is a shocking state to be in. Cannot you set

Friday to make, with the things that are left from your wreck, instruments and ornaments for some neighbouring savages, who have more food than they know what to do with? In that way, if Friday were expert and industrious, you might be better supplied than ever."

"Our neighbours," answered Robinson, "would make food of us if they could."

"Oh!" said I, "I had forgotten that restriction on trade. Well, you cannot enlarge your field of production in that way, and it is a sad affair; but I know what the English political economists would advise; for Friday's sake, at least."

"Political economists!" exclaimed Robinson, "who are they?"

"They are," I replied "a new sect, and have set up a new god, which is called Capital, and which they worship devoutly."

"The wicked idolaters! but what would they advise?"

"Only for Friday's sake, mind, in order that his wages might be higher, they would advise you to increase your capital."

"What! when I have already more than Friday and I shall know how to use?"

"Yes; with abundance of capital, they believe, wages are sure to be high."

"And my share, the profits I think you called it, how is that to be made high?"

"By diminishing your capital, so that wages

may be low ; for, say they, when wages are low, profits are sure to be high."

Here Robinson laughed so loud that I awoke ; saying to myself—The only way in which Robinson and his man could get back to high profits and high wages, would be by getting back the land that they have lost.

By this dream I was led to observe, that the modern economists, in treating of the production and distribution of wealth, have overlooked the chief element of production ; namely, the field in which capital and labour are employed. They have written volumes on capital and labour, and the effect of the various proportions which these may bear to each other, but have scarcely noticed the field of production ; and this but incidentally when explaining what they conceive to be the nature of rent. In their theory of rent, indeed, they show, that as capital increases on a limited field of production, it is employed with less and less productiveness, whence the inference might be drawn that in such a case profits must become lower and lower ; but of this the modern economists say not a word. In fact, to have drawn such an inference would have placed them in an awkward position ; since in order to support their views of the omnipotence of capital without regard to the means of investment, they have fallen upon Adam Smith for saying, that "the mutual competition of capitalists naturally tends

to lower profit." Instead, therefore, of showing the effects which arise from various proportions between capital and the field of production, they have taken some pains to establish that there are not any such effects ; that the effects which Adam Smith supposed to arise from an increase of capital in proportion to the field, or from a decrease of the field in proportion to capital, have never existed, save in the imagination of their great master. How far they are right or wrong, is a question of great importance to the English.

Bring all the people out of France into England ; would that make any difference in English profits and wages ? None, Messrs. Mill and M'Culloch would say, provided the French should bring all their capital with them. But what could they do with their capital in a field which is already quite full ? Employ it, would be the answer, in manufactures, and so get food from other countries. Good, I reply, if there were no corn laws ; but that means, increase the field of production, lay hold of foreign fields, in proportion to the increase of capital and people in England. Field of production, they would say, we acknowledge no such term ; capital is all in all.

Well, then, suppose that only the capitalists of France should come to England with all their moveable property ; what effect would that have on English profits and wages ? Wages, according to the economists would rise ; and, through the

rise of wages, but not otherwise, profits would fall. But in what way would this increase of capital raise wages? By causing, would be the answer, a greater demand for labour. Truly, if the new capital were invested productively, but not otherwise; and how should it be invested productively, or even at all, when already the capital of England is so great, in proportion to the means of productive investment, that it overflows into France* and other foreign fields of production? Nonsense! I hear them exclaim, capital and production are synonymous. Let us try them again.

Suppose the sea for three hundred miles east and west of England to be turned into excellent land, and that every one were at liberty to take as much of it as he could cultivate in the most productive way, that is, with the greatest combination of power, according to the English system of farming. What effect would that have on profits and wages? Answer not rashly; but think of America. Messrs. Mill and M'Culloch, answering devoutly towards the god of their idolatry, would say—No effect at all, provided the proportion between capital and population remained the same. Well, gentlemen, let us suppose that the proportion between capital and population were not altered for some time; that a great mass of capital which is now lying idle, or

* Some large iron works, and considerable manufactures of cotton and lace, in France, are carried on with English capital.

about to fly abroad in the shape of foreign loans and distant speculations, were employed in cultivating the new land and turned into food, which is capital; would not the effect be, supposing always that the mass of capital now idle and so to find employment were very great indeed; in that case, I say, would not the effect be a great increase of the demand for labour and a general rise of wages? They must answer—yes. Yes, gentlemen, in that case the mere conversion of one sort of capital into another sort, without any increase of the quantity, would produce higher wages. Let us suppose, further, that the new land were of so good a quality that the gross produce of all capital employed on it should be sufficient to replace that capital, to pay high wages, and to leave high profits for the capitalists; in that case, bearing in mind that the extent of the new land is six hundred miles square, would not capital be withdrawn from pursuits, in which the profits are low, and employed in cultivating this very productive land? and would not the effect be a general rise of profits? Inevitably, they must admit. Then the case may be supposed in which wages and profits, both together, would rise without any increase or decrease of capital.

Supposed, yes, they might say, but you suppose a miracle. And, you, gentlemen, do not you illustrate all your doctrines, true or false, by supposed cases? But I will soon come to the prac-

tical case : meanwhile one more question with regard to this miracle. Suppose that the eight hundred millions which have been thrown away, in creating your national debt had been saved, had not been wasted abroad, and were lying idle in any shape you please ; or rather, for a much lower draft on the imagination will serve my turn, suppose that the mass of English capital actually either lying idle, or invested with very low profit, were sufficient, when employed on this new and very productive land, to create a demand for more labourers than England could supply without delay ; and that, consequently, labourers, tempted by the prospect of high wages, should immigrate from Ireland and France. In that case ; no increase, mind, but merely a conversion of capital is supposed ; in that case, an enlargement of the field of production, a mere increase in the productiveness of capital, would have caused a change in the proportion between capital and labour, would have made the labourers more in proportion to capital. Here, you see, is a cause antecedent to your great first cause, the proportion between capital and labour : and observe, further, that the effect produced by enlarging the field of production, namely, an increase of labourers, might have no effect at all on the rate of wages ; or rather that wages might rise whilst the number of labourers was increasing, provided the amount of capital lately idle, and now

used productively, were more than sufficient to employ the increasing body of labourers.

In America profits and wages, both, are high without a miracle. In America the land is so good, it returns so large a produce to capital and labour, however unskilfully employed, that all who cultivate it obtain plenty, like Robinson and his man in the first part of my dream ; the share of the masters being called high profits, and that of the servants high wages. Moreover, the good land in America is so plentiful, that no one is forced to employ his capital or labour less productively than in agriculture. Consequently, all the capital employed in America yields high profits and high wages ; the high profits and wages of agriculture being spent in giving high profits and wages to capitalists and labourers engaged in other pursuits. The productiveness of all capital and labour is very great, and does not decrease with the increase of capital and labour ; because, however rapid that increase, it is accompanied by a corresponding increase of the very productive field. The continued high profits and high wages of America, then, appear to arise from the large proportion which, in America, the field of production continually bears to capital and labour.

In England, on the contrary, the field of production is limited, first by nature, and next by the corn laws, which decree that the people of the united kingdom shall have no bread but that

which is grown in the united kingdom. This limited field, moreover, is so full of capitalists, that these, by competing with each other, reduce profits to a very low rate ; and so full of labourers, that these, by competing with each other, reduce wages to a very low rate. If it were not for this severe competition amongst capitalists, a greater difference than actually exists between the prices of English and American corn would shew the vast difference between the natural fertility of land in England and land in America : if it were not for this severe competition amongst labourers, English labour, which from the mode in which it is employed is so much more productive than American labour, in proportion to the number of hands, would be better paid, instead of being far worse paid than American labour. In England, both classes, capitalists and labourers, are fighting for room. Consequently, it may be said that, in England, low profits and low wages are owing to the small proportion which the field of production continually bears to capital and labour.

But, the Archbishop of Dublin might say ; but low profits and low wages, together, have occurred in England before now, when the proportion of capital and labour to the field, as you call it, was much less than it is at present. How could that have occurred if, as you say, profits and wages depend on the proportion which capital and la-

bour bear to the field of production? Further, the cases have often happened of low wages with high profits, and high wages with low profits. Such cases are at variance with your theory.

No, my lord; nor do I say that profits and wages depend solely on the proportion which capital and labour bear to the field of production. But I will try to explain my theory after the fashion of the economists: begging such readers as find this note dull, to pass on to the next, where they will find some urgent reasons for turning back to this one.

Capital pays labour, and labour uses capital. Between these, therefore, there is an intimate relation. The proportion also, which these bear to each other, is always of some importance; because, whatever the produce of industry, the division of that produce between the two classes who raise it, is regulated by the number of labourers in proportion to the capital employed. I say employed, because capital which cannot be employed, which lies idle for want of employment, is as if it did not exist. When labourers are few in proportion to capital for which there is employment, the labourer exacts a large share of the produce, which leaves but a small share for the capitalist; and when capital is small in proportion to labour, the capitalist can reserve a large share of the produce for himself, leaving but a small share for the labourers. So far the political economists;

and so far both profits and wages depend on the proportion between labour and capital. But all this relates to nothing but the division of the produce. A far more important question remains—what determines the amount of produce to be divided? Suppose the shares *fixed* at half and half: now double the produce. Profits are doubled and wages are doubled; the capitalist who got ten per cent. now gets twenty per cent.; the labourer who got two shillings a day now gets four shillings a day. Messrs. Mill and M'Culloch would contend that wages had not been altered; but your friend Mr. Senior, and you, my lord, would say that wages had been altered in amount, though not in share. Still, with this remark you would rest satisfied; and concerning the effect on profits of doubling the produce of industry, you would say nothing.

Now I venture to suggest, that the mere division of produce between capitalists and labourers is a matter of very small moment, indeed, when compared with the amount of produce to be divided; that, whether the capitalist obtain three quarters and the labourers one quarter, or the labourers three quarters and the capitalist one quarter, the grand question is, how much do the two parties divide between them. By discussing the question of shares only, all that we can learn is, how one party may gain by the other party's loss; by discussing the question of amount, we

may discover what is that state of things most beneficial to both parties. By dwelling altogether on the former question, we make bad blood between the two classes; telling the capitalist that he must suffer unless his labourers be miserable; assuring the labourer that his sufferings arise from his master's prosperity: by examining the latter question we may prove that masters and servants have one and the same interest; that, as there is a state of things bad for both parties, so is there a state of things good for both parties. And this latter question is of vast practical importance to the English at this present moment; when, as I have endeavoured to show in the succeeding note, there is every prospect of a desperate struggle between the two parties, who have been set against each other by being told, that the welfare of either party is incompatible with the welfare of the other.

The productiveness of industry depends upon first, the agency of nature, that is, the natural quality of the land from which subsistence is derived; secondly, upon combination of power for distribution of employments, which, for shortness, may be called skill. But these two regulators of production have a tendency to act in opposite directions. When a people cultivate land of very great natural fertility, and without limit as to space, so that the people may increase without resorting to inferior soils, they have no

inducement to employ their industry in the most skilful way. On the contrary, they are strongly impelled to cut up their capital and labour into small distinct fractions.* America is the example, where the produce raised by a given amount of capital and labour, though sufficient to yield high profits and high wages, is not equal to a fourth, perhaps, of what the same amount of capital and labour would produce on the same land, if employed with English skill. To proceed at once to the other example, a produce sufficient to feed the actual population of England, could not have been raised in England without the greatest skill in the application of capital and labour. As population increased in a country naturally sterile and of limited extent, industry was applied with more and more skill to the cultivation of land; and the increase of skill counteracted the decrease of natural productiveness when capital was applied to waste land of inferior quality, or more capital was used on land already cultivated.

But though greater skill counteract the growing necessity of employing capital and labour with less and less assistance from nature, still, in the long run, the produce obtained with the maximum of skill and the minimum of natural fertility, will not be more than sufficient to

* See note on the origin, progress and prospects, of slavery in America.

afford inducements for continuing the work of production. The amounts of produce, indeed, raised by equal capitals will be very different, because land varies in natural fertility and in circumstances of position, such as vicinity to manure and a market; but, as those who cultivate land of superior quality or position, must pay to the owners of such land, as a premium for being allowed to use it, all the excess of produce above what suffices to replace capital with ordinary profits (they must do this, because others would do so if they would not), the whole produce to be divided between capitalists and labourers is, notwithstanding the greatest skill, reduced to the minimum.

The land, therefore, from which a society derives its food, constitutes its field of production; and the productiveness of capital, subject to the temporary effect of increasing skill, depends on the proportion which capital bears to the field in which it is employed.

With this introduction, the four following cases will describe all the common conditions of society which exhibit different rates of profit and wages.

First. The case in which capital bears a large proportion to labour, and a small proportion to the field of production. The United States and some new colonies are the examples. In this case, wages are high in share and in amount;

profits being, though low in share, high in amount.

Secondly. The case in which capital bears a large proportion to labour, and also a large proportion to the field of production. High wages and low profits will be the result. This was the case in France towards the close of the last war, when the conscription had rendered labourers scarce : more than once, it has been the case in England after a pestilence.

Thirdly. The case in which capital bears a small proportion to labour, and also a small proportion to the field of production. Low wages and high profits will be the result ; the produce divided being great, but the labourers' share small. This is the case of nearly all countries in which, with superabundance of labourers, there is plenty of room for the employment of more capital without any decrease of productiveness. Bengal is a good example, where wages are two pence a day, and the rate of interest twelve per cent.

Fourthly. The case in which capital bears a small proportion to labour, and a great proportion to the field of production. This case gives low profits and low wages also ; the whole produce of industry to be divided amongst the producers being reduced to the minimum. France may be an example of this case.

But these are common cases. The present

case of England differs from all of these, in as much as we cannot say that English capital bears a small proportion to English labour ; seeing that, in consequence of the very high proportion which English capital bears to the field of production, great masses of capital lie idle, are invested unproductively, that is wasted, and are exported to other countries, not taking with them a corresponding amount, or any amount, of English labour. The same thing appears to have occurred formerly in Genoa, Venice and Holland.

The case of England differs from all other actual cases in a very important particular. Political economists have described three states of society, the progressive, the stationary and the retrograde. They call progressive, that state of society in which both capital and the field of production increase as fast as population can possibly increase ; so that profits and wages, both, being constantly high, whatever the division of produce, the people increase as fast as possible. They call stationary, that condition of society in which there is no further room for the productive employment of industry, in which case, profits and wages are constantly as low as possible. They call the retrograde state of society, that in which, generally from moral causes, the field of production constantly decreases ; in which case, not only are profits and wages constantly at the minimum, but every year some capitalists are

reduced to the state of labourers; and, yet the labouring class becomes less and less numerous. The Venetian republic, when she lost the trade between Europe and Asia, was an example of this case: was not Holland in political convulsions another?

There appears to be a fourth state of society, which may be called stationary as to profits and wages, but which is progressive as to the amount of capital, the extent of the field for employing industry, and the number of people. The field, the capital, and the people, may increase; yet if the enlargement of the field be not more rapid than the increase of capital, no alteration of profits will occur; nor any alteration of wages, unless the field be enlarged and capital be increased, at the same time, more rapidly than people shall increase. Though, in such a state of society, both capitalists and labourers will increase in number, though new means of communication will be opened, though fresh towns will arise, though the increase of population and of national wealth may be striking, nevertheless the rate of profits may still be low, the rate of wages but just sufficient to permit an increase of labourers, the majority of capitalists in a state of uneasiness, and the whole body of labourers miserable and degraded. This has been the case of England since 1815. War ceasing, great masses of capital were no longer wasted every year, but were accu-

culated in England; new channels of investment were opened; the number of capitalists was visibly augmented; signs of increasing wealth appeared in all directions; but as the field of production was not enlarged so rapidly as capital increased, more and more competition amongst capitalists led to the lowest rate of profit, and made the condition of the greater number worse than that of the smaller number. So with respect to the labouring class; with the peace, which removed one check to the increase of people, came great improvements in medicine, which removed other checks; and the common people increased faster than the means of employment for increasing capital. In a word, both the capital and the people increased faster than the field of production was enlarged. This change of the proportion between two of the elements of production and the third or chief element, explains the coincidence of enormous, nay, of rapidly increasing national wealth, with the uneasiness of the middle class and the misery of the bulk of the people.

The moral and strictly political effects of the various proportions which the field of production bears to capital and population, must now be briefly considered.

In the progressive state of society, capital has a tendency to an equal distribution amongst all the people. In America, notwithstanding high pro-

fits, individuals seldom accumulate large fortunes. Though the produce divided between the capitalist and the labourer be large, the labourer takes so great a share, that he soon becomes a capitalist. Under this most progressive state of society, therefore, the increase of capital is divided, pretty equally, amongst a number of capitalists increasing at the same rate as the capital; so that whilst none are compelled to work as servants through life, few, even of those whose lives are unusually long, can accumulate great masses of wealth. Moreover, in such a state of things the independence and self-respect of all begets a love of equality, and thus conduces to the equal distribution of the capitalist's wealth amongst his children; so that an individual seldom inherits the savings of many generations, or even the bulk of his father's property. In this state of things, there is no idle class, no spending class, as Captain Hall has remarked, no adoration of wealth, no oppression of the poor, no reason for political discontent. This appears to be the happiest state of society consistent with the institution of property.

In those states of society which are either retrograde or stationary, as well as in that peculiar state which, though advancing in the aggregate of wealth, gives low profits and low wages, wealth inevitably accumulates in a few hands. Wages being extremely low, the great body of the people

are unable to save ; and profits being extremely low, small capitalists consume the whole, or nearly the whole, of what remains to them after replacing their capital. Some, indeed, appear to be employed in diminishing their capital. Mr. Mill has incidentally supposed the case, in which none but large capitalists should be able to save, or even to live, on the profits of capital ; in which society should consist only of labourers and great capitalists.* These last, whose consumption is small when compared with the returns of their large capitals, even with very low profits, are able to accumulate in proportion to the amount of their wealth. In the next place, when the common rate of profit is low, the small capitalist is apt to be ruined by fluctuations in trade, which are the periods of harvest to the great capitalist, who can wait to buy when the market price is low and to sell when it is high. When too, the common rate of profits is low, great capitalists are not always subject to the law of competition. In some operations, such for example as the distillation of spirits, porter brewing, tanning, and the publication of a daily newspaper heavily taxed,

* " In proportion as capital is attended with less and less of annual return, the owners of capital have less and less income. If the income from capital be continually diminished, in process of time NONE BUT THE OWNERS OF LARGE MASSES OF CAPITAL WILL DERIVE FROM IT THE MEANS OF SUBSISTENCE." *Mill's Elements of Political Economy*, page 61, 3d edit.

the amount of capital required is so large, and the time when a return may be expected so distant, that no small capitalist can undertake one of them with a prospect of advantage. Such operations can be conducted only by the owners of large capitals, who thus establish monopolies whereby they obtain profits somewhat above the common rate. Again, when wages and profits are low in consequence of the large proportion which capital and people bear to the field of production, a part of the produce of industry falls to the owners of land, both as landlords and capitalists; a class who, speaking generally, disdain the pursuits of industry, and who in most countries have made laws for the descent of land, and of capital fixed on land, which promote the accumulation of wealth in a few hands. When, further, low wages and low profits condemn the bulk of the people to want, and all small capitalists to distress or vexation, wealth obtains such inordinate respect and so many advantages over and above what wealth will purchase in any market, that slavishness on the one hand, and pride on the other, become habitual. And to these evils must be added, the corruption of idleness, grasping and gambling habits, which lead to dishonesty amongst the middle class, and savage discontent amongst those who are without hope. Thus the retrograde or stationary condition, presents at the same moment, gorgeous palaces and wretched

hovels, complete idleness and incessant toil, high mental cultivation and the most barbarous ignorance: it cannot but produce a general corruption of morals, nor end, sooner or later, but in violent political convulsions.

Not only the coincidence of misery and uneasiness with enormous wealth, but all the most striking social peculiarities of England, may be traced to a superabundance of capital and population in proportion to the means of employing capital and labour. Nay, it might perhaps be shown, by reference to history, that the decline and fall of empires have, in great measure, been owing to the excess of two of the elements of production over the third; which disproportion throws great part of the national wealth into the hands of an idle class, producing an extreme inequality of conditions, and therefore an extreme corruption of morals, with pride, insolence and cruelty on the side of the wealthy few, discontent and recklessness on the part of the suffering many; and resulting, finally, in jealousies, divisions, commotion and civil wars, which dry up the very springs of national greatness.

NOTE V.

POLITICAL PROSPECTS OF THE ENGLISH.

Retrospect—the constitution of 1688—its merits and defects—maintained by corruption—populace subservient to the ruling class—effects of knowledge—on the middle class—on the poor—history of the late change in the constitution—new constitution obtained by the physical force—new constitution described—not likely to last—dangers in the prospect of change—democracy, or worse, apparently inevitable—dangers of democracy—possible means of avoiding the probable evils of change—Christian legislation—means of improving the physical condition of the bulk of the people, and of removing the uneasiness of the middle class.

IN order to take a just view of the political prospects of the English, we must look back a little; besides observing carefully by what means was brought about that peaceful, but very difficult, political change, that most pregnant revolution, which has just taken place in England.

The theory of the English government, as settled by the revolution of 1688, was this:—three powers in one power; the king one power, the

lords one power, and the commons one power ; but the power of the king, of the lords, and of the commons, is all one, co-existent and co-equal : the king powerful, the lords powerful, and the commons powerful ; and yet there are not three powers but one power. And in this trinity, none is afore or after the other, none is greater or less than another ; but the whole three powers are co-existent together and co-equal. Nevertheless, though all laws must have the consent of king, lords and commons, the king cannot originate any laws, nor the lords any laws relating to taxes ; while the king is the sole executor of the laws. But the king can do no wrong ; his ministers, alone, being responsible for his acts. Furthermore, the king's power descends from father to son ; as does that of the lords ; and the king can create lords without any limit as to number. Lastly, the commons represent the whole nation, save the king and lords, in parliament assembled.

This is the theory of the English constitution, as settled in 1688. The practice of that constitution has been as follows.

Since no operation of government can be conducted without money, the commons, who hold the public purse, have been omnipotent. They have possessed the power to make whatever laws they pleased, and to compel the execution of such laws in whatever manner they pleased. What

things they have done by the exercise of that power, or left undone by abstaining from the exercise of it, is quite another question, depending on the motives by which they were actuated. They may have chosen to agree with the king and the lords, or occasionally to disagree with them, to enlarge or curtail the royal functions, to restrict or extend popular rights ; but, whatever may have been their inclinations, whatever their acts, they have never wanted power to do as they pleased.

This is the first great difference between the theory and practice of the English constitution. The next is, that the commons, instead of representing the whole nation, save the king and lords, have been partly self-elected, partly nominated by individual lords, and partly chosen by certain bodies of the people. The rights of self-election and of nomination were bought and sold like an estate, and descended along with estates ; while the open elections were so costly to the candidates that none but rich men could be chosen. The whole power, therefore, of the English government resided in a few hundred men, who had the inclination and the wealth to buy seats in the house of commons, either for themselves or their dependents. That government has been called the oligarchy of boroughmongers.

Seeing how this oligarchy was constituted, its motives for doing certain things, and for leaving

other things undone, become plain enough. This would have differed from all other oligarchies, if the main object of its members had not been to share amongst themselves the emoluments and distinctions of government. Monarchy being a costly form of government, requiring a great outlay to maintain the dignity of the crown, opens a wide field of emolument: the English boroughmongers, therefore, have always been strongly attached to the monarchical form of government. Titles of honour are amongst the distinctions enjoyed by a governing class, and it is natural that he who has himself delighted in a title of honour should wish to transmit it to his posterity: the English boroughmongers, therefore, have always been fond of an hereditary nobility. But a mere title, such as lord, or three-tailed bashaw or blue buttoned mandarin, would not be much esteemed unless there were attached to it, not only real power, but also the appearance of power. Now, of the English boroughmongers a good proportion were peers, who exercised real power by means of their dependents in the house of commons; but, as this was, as far as possible, to be concealed from the nation, they could not appear to exercise power without a legislative assembly of their own: the English boroughmongers, therefore, have always warmly approved of a noble chamber, in which the appearance of making laws should descend along with titles of honour. As wealth was

the source of each man's power in the government of boroughmongers, each boroughmonger wished that his wealth should go down to his posterity undiminished : hence the profound attachment of English boroughmongers to entails and the law of primogeniture. But rich men, like poor men, have daughters and younger sons : how was the rich boroughmonger to provide for these without diminishing his wealth ? Out of the public purse, over which, either by sitting in the house of commons, self-elected, or by means of his dependents who sat there, he exercised a large share of control. Boroughs were dear and elections very costly : a snug borough cost near 100,000*l.*, and one man has spent 100,000*l.* on one county election : how were such vast sums to be recovered ? The public purse was always at hand. Hence one learns why the English people, who according to the theory of their constitution were all represented by the house of commons, have, in practice, been so heavily taxed by that assembly.

Oligarchy and faction are almost synonymous terms ; first, as every oligarchy is a faction, and next, as oligarchies have always been divided into opposing factions. From 1688 to 1830, the whig and tory factions of the English oligarchy ruled by turns, one in and the other out, as the force of either party prevailed in the house of commons. But their struggles for emolument and distinctions, instead of weakening the government,

added considerably to its strength. The party that was out commonly found fault with the party that was in, took up national grievances and made great professions of public virtue: whence, as one party was always out, the nation always imagined that a portion of the legislature was singly devoted to the national welfare. When the party that was out became the most powerful in the house of commons, and therefore got in, the king appeared to side with that party, and the nation rejoiced in a patriotic monarch. Now and then, one faction was strongest in the commons' house and the other in the lords' house, whence differences between the two houses, which gave to the lords' house an air of independence; an occasional appearance which assisted in holding the nation to the constitutional faith. Such differences, however, could never be serious or of long duration, because the faction which ruled in the commons could always exercise, in the king's name, the power of creating peers. At other times, the king disagreed with the ruling faction and dissolved the house of commons, when a grand election struggle took place between the two parties; but whichever party bought the greater number of votes in the new house of commons became master of the government, or rather the government itself; so that, though the king occasionally exerted a will of his own, his independence was but momentary. A

dissolution of the house of commons was always called an appeal to the nation: thus, whenever the king exerted an independent will the nation appeared to do so likewise; thus an occasional difference between the king and the ruling faction, by giving an air of independence to the king, and an air of power to the people, tended to preserve the nation's belief in the reality and beauty of the constitution. When a petty disagreement occurred amongst the three estates, the nation admired the beautiful balance of the constitution, and when such a disagreement ceased, the beautiful harmony of the constitution was the thing to be admired. By such fictions and phrases, the real oligarchy of boroughmongers was made to pass for an inimitable mixed government, the envy and admiration of surrounding countries.

And in truth this counterfeit mixture of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy, was the best government ever established in Europe. Though the powers of government rested in the hands of a few, those few owed their power to wealth, and any one who could acquire great wealth might help to govern. The qualification for the enjoyment of power being wealth, it was natural that the government should take great care of the wealthy. Moreover, as at all times many of those who governed had lately sprung from an inferior class, it was natural that they should sympathise with a class or two below them. The English

government, accordingly, ever since it became an oligarchy of boroughmongers, has provided better than any other government of Europe for the security of property and persons.

Security of property! personal safety! What more could be asked of any government? Not much; for these are the chief ends of government. Why then were the English dissatisfied with their glorious constitution? why have they lately made another of a very different character? These questions will be answered by stating in what respect, chiefly, the constitution was not a good one; secondly, by describing the means of its preservation; and thirdly by showing how the force on which it depended was gradually destroyed.

The old English constitution gave security to property, with safety to persons, according to a scale, by which the security and safety was bestowed in proportion to wealth. Justice was made exceedingly dear. Thus, though there was justice for all who could buy it, there was none for those who could not; and amongst those who could pay for it, there was most for him who could pay most. As between two persons of equal wealth, law was justice, though dear; as between two persons of unequal wealth, law was injustice. In the attack and defence of persons and property, law, mis-called justice, favoured the richer party, whether he attacked another

wrongfully or defended his own right; and was, to the same extent of course, unfavourable to the poorer party, whether he were right or wrong. Down the scale of wealth, there was an active principle of wrong, and up the scale of wealth, a defensive principle of right. He who was at the top of the scale could injure the others, who could not injure him; those who were at the bottom of the scale could not injure the others, but might be injured by them. These were the principles on which the old English constitution afforded protection to persons and property. Recollecting how much the happiness of man in society depends on the administration of law, it will appear that in this respect the old English constitution was a very bad one.

That constitution bestowed upon superior wealth many privileges, some hurtful to the majority and in themselves odious, others odious merely as privileges bestowed upon wealth. Under that constitution, the rich, alone, could obtain the higher emoluments, distinctions and other gratifications, of power; could receive titles of honour; could make laws in the house of commons; could enjoy or give places, and receive or bestow pensions; could administer rural laws, after making them; could manage roads at the public expense, and stop roads convenient to the public; could build, fill and govern, jails; could keep game, shoot other people's game and transport other people

for shooting their game ; could be married in a particular way, and be divorced from their wives ; could have their children educated at a particular place at the public expense ; could appoint religious teachers ; could fix rates of wages, saying to the poor—" you shall marry, and you shall remain asunder : you who are married shall not live together ;" with many more privileges, so far of a like kind as to be obviously unfair. What privilege, indeed, is free from injustice ? Whichsoever of these privileges was most hurtful to the nation, all of them were calculated to excite hatred towards the privileged class ; and though that curious machine, the constitution, would have been less productive, would not have worked, perhaps, without them, they were very proper to bring about a revolution sooner or later.

The existence of every government of the many by a few must depend upon some kind of force, wherewith to secure the obedience of the many. The most common force of government has been a body of guards, assisted by a body of spies. This, however, was not the force of the old English constitution, which out of regard to the liberty of the subject, having property, was always opposed to standing armies and political police. The force of the old English constitution was corruption ; an engine of great power, and one admirably fitted in this case to the machine that it was employed to work. The oligarchy, which

under the name of a mixed government was set up in France eighteen years ago, has been worked by an engine of this sort; but not well. In material mechanism, simplicity is a great merit; in political machinery, having for object to keep many in subjection to a few, the grand point is complication. In the French oligarchy, there was a sad want of entanglement; and then the French corruption was all of one sort, obvious to the most careless observer. In France, political corruption was a species of force; in England, a genus, comprehending many species. Of that kind of corruption which was unique in France, namely, expenditure of public money by the government, there was plenty in England; but this, great as it appears when compared with the expenditure of other governments, seems small when compared with the great mass of jobs and monopolies by which it was assisted. Small, however, as it appears in this point of view it was mighty by the manner of applying it. The public income of France was divided amongst the public servants on these two erroneous principles; first, that every one should work for his pay; secondly, that all public servants should be paid sufficiently. The principles, on the contrary, which directed the public expenditure of England, were, first, that many should be paid who did not work at all; secondly, that those who worked least should be paid the most, and those who worked most, the

least. The churches of the two countries give a good example of the operation of these opposite principles. In the French church, none were idle ; all the hard working clergy received comfortable incomes ; and the income of a bishop was not more than seven or eight times as much as that of a curate. In the English church, large incomes were given to clergymen who seldom entered a church, and never either a pulpit or a cottage ; the hard working clergy were kept in a state of want ; and the income of many a bishop was equal to the united incomes of three or four hundred curates. Thus, in the French church, there were no great prizes by which strong and ambitious spirits might be attached to the established order of things ; nor were clergymen of moderate disposition and talents urged, either by poverty or the hope of riches, to curry favour with the ruling class. The strong and ambitious spirits of the French church, accordingly, instead of supporting the Hartwell charter, spared no pains to overturn it, while French clergymen of moderate disposition and talents were content to vegetate, comfortably indifferent touching questions of government. Now turn to England : here the most able and ambitious of the clergy, desiring either to keep or obtain great prizes in the church, supported the constitution with all their might, while clergymen of moderate temper and abilities could obtain comfortable incomes only

by siding with one or other of the state factions, and zealously supporting the constitution, to which both factions were equally attached. The contrast is remarkable, and helps to explain why the charter of William III. lasted a hundred and twenty-five years longer than the charter of Louis XVIII. It does but help, however, towards this explanation; as the clergy of England did but help to support the constitution. The two principles of sinecures, and of much pay for little work and much work for little pay, were adopted in every department of the public expenditure; in the military and civil branches of the army and navy, and the distribution of prize money, in the administration of law, in public education, in the diplomatic service, in the collection of the revenue, in all public offices and in the management of the colonies, not forgetting Ireland. Thus a great body of the people were induced, some by the desire of gain and some by the fear of loss, to stand by the glorious constitution. If none had been paid who did not work, and all who worked had received moderate but sufficient pay, those who were able and ambitious might have longed for a change, and the remainder might have wanted a motive for zeal in support of things as they were. Inequality is the soul of political corruption.

But the corruption, depending on a judicious outlay of public money in the way of pensions

and places, was small when compared with that which arose out of jobs and monopolies. This distinction may be drawn between a job and a monopoly, that the one is a direct, the other an indirect, robbery of the public. Under the old English constitution, the public was robbed directly by several classes of jobs; jobs in respect to contracts for supplies, loans and public works, victualling jobs, slopping jobs, scrip jobs, building jobs, harbour, road, bridge and canal jobs, and other jobs of the same class without end; the effect of each of these jobs being, that the government paid more than would have sufficed if the contracts had been submitted to open competition; that the difference between the necessary and actual expenditure was so much public plunder bestowed on friends of the glorious constitution. Next, there were more palpable jobs; such as when crown lands were sold or let for much less than their value, when the government purchased land for more than its value, when grants of public money were made to reward, in name public services, in reality devotion to the constitution, when public works were undertaken, either useless or hurtful to the public, or when commissioners were appointed to perform certain acts, and handsomely paid for doing nothing. All these are but a sample of the jobbing that took place under the old English constitution. Now observe, if the whole of

what was stolen from the public, by means of all these jobs had been spent honestly in the public service, the constitution would have wanted the zealous support of a great band of robbers, delighted with the present and fearful of change. Really, the old constitution is to be admired more for its roguery than its profusion.

Next come monopolies ; and, first, monopolies of trade, exclusive power to deal with particular countries or in particular articles, such as, of late years, the East India Company, the Bank of England, the West India planter's monopoly of the British market, and the corn monopoly of the landlords, which is the greatest of all : secondly, monopolies of quite another kind, such as that of the bar, which bestows on a particular class the privilege of pleading in the courts, and that which almost forbids a barrister, even, to practice in certain courts unless he can afford to pay for chambers in certain spots, where, of course, chambers are extremely dear ; that other monopoly of the law by which 1,200*l.* must be paid as an apprentice fee for liberty to practice in some very important courts ;* the military monopoly arising from the system of purchasing commissions, and very many more of which a naked list would fill several pages. The principle of monopoly seems to be :—gain with one hand and lose

* The courts which relate to marriage and the descent of personal property.

with the other; you rob me, and I rob you. Englishmen who gained by those monopolies in which they had a share, lost by others in which they had no share. But the gain was manifest, while the loss was imperceptible: there was the pleasure of robbing, without the pain of knowing that you were robbed. So much for individual feeling; but now observe the political influence of monopolies. Of the loss, which was hidden, no one took note; but the gain was felt, joyfully felt, and attributed, with gratitude, to the inimitable constitution. Adding to the long list of simple jobs and pure monopolies a multitude of establishments, half job, half monopoly, such as corporations enjoying exclusive privileges, holding lands, levying taxes, administering charities and bestowing offices, one begins to understand the power of that corruption which moved the old English constitution. It works well! George Canning, used to exclaim: countless plunderers responded,—it works well!

But corruption was not the sole support of the boroughmongers' oligarchy. Wherever there exists only two classes, as in Russia and the slave-states of America, the ruling class despise the slaves, and the slaves hate their rulers. The wise ancestors of Englishmen and Americans lived in such like enmity towards each other, when their habitations consisted only of huts and castles. But as a middle class grows up, the highest and lowest

classes generally conspire to injure those by whom they are separated. England, ever since the revolution, presents a striking instance of combination between the aristocracy and the mob for the purpose of harming the middle class. Until the late peace, the physical force was always subservient to the ends of the ruling class; as when mobs assembled to the cries of "no popery," and "church and king," when the poor delighted in a victory over their "natural enemies," the French jacobins. The old English constitution worked well, as long as it was supported by the physical force. How this support was obtained, is not a mystery. For above a century, at least, after 1688, they who composed the physical force, the bulk of the people, were kept in a state of profound ignorance. Closely resembling working cattle, so far as knowledge goes, they were patient under oppression, as the horse, through ignorance of his own strength, submits to the spur. To obedience they added reverence. A lord or a bishop, a rich squire or beneficed clergyman, a rich contractor or stockjobber, residing in his mansion, surrounded by a park, or when in London still in a mansion, surrounded by mansions, seldom met the poor but on occasions of show or excitement, when a display of his wealth, and of the respect paid to him by the middle class, led the ignorant poorest class to regard him as a demi-god. Thus elevated above the crowd,

he could treat them with familiarity, and yet preserve their respect, whilst airs of condescension, from one so raised, were grateful to those so abject. Rank and wealth, accordingly, were higher recommendations to mob popularity than learning and virtue. In the next place, with regard to property, the great cause of jealousy and contention amongst men, an English aristocrat of the last century was supposed, by the grossly ignorant poor, to derive his wealth from any source but their labour ; and he did actually divide amongst the poor a portion of the money which he obtained from the public purse. A general election used to cause a fall in the funds, by the sale of stock for the purpose of bribing, in one shape or other, all poor electors in the kingdom. Add to this the fiction, by which a good many poor men appeared to exert a voice in choosing the house of commons, the drunkenness, license and riot which the ruling class encouraged at elections, the sham of humility and good fellowship by which the candidates used to cajole the populace ; taking all these things into account, the only wonder is, that the poor, ignorant, degraded, mass should ever have had a will of their own.

We have now to see how the force on which the constitution depended, was gradually destroyed.

It is not so very long since old Englishwomen were burnt for witchcraft, to the great satisfac-

tion of every body, save the old women. Why do they no longer burn old women in England? Because, in the course of little more than a century, public opinion respecting witchcraft has undergone the greatest change. The same thing has happened with respect to dear justice, privileges, jobs, monopolies, and the *prestige* of aristocracy. To examine fully, when this change of opinion began, and by what steps it proceeded, would carry me too far; but a few remarks on the subject may not be unacceptable to Americans.

Fifty years ago, instruction was confined to a portion of the highest class. The middle class, indeed, could read and write; but their reading did not extend beyond divinity, novels, the racing calendar, Moore's prophetic almanack, and, now and then, a newspaper adapted to their ignorance. As for any interchange of ideas by means of writing and printing, they never thought of such a thing; or rather, they would have thought it presumptuous, if not unnatural, in them to form ideas upon subjects of general interest. Except when one of their narrow superstitions was attacked, as for example, their fear of popish supremacy, they left all public questions to the nobility, clergy and gentry, whom alone they supposed capable of understanding such matters. They eat, drank, attended to their business, went to church, horse-races and raree-shows, stared and wondered when a great man passed, and believed

that the whole public duty of man consisted in honouring the king and loving the rest of the royal family. The great French revolution entirely changed their character. When they saw that men of their own class in a neighbouring country had undertaken to govern, their slothful and slavish propensities gave way to political excitement. The very horrors which succeeded the French revolution, had an excellent effect on them ; setting them to think, read and even write, on public questions, and, forcing them, above all, to look into the condition of their inferiors. During the long war that followed, some of them sided with the aristocracy, and some wished success to that revolution against which the war was directed ; but all of them took an earnest part in public affairs. Every public question was now discussed, by them, and for them, too, by their superiors, who wanted their assistance. Books, magazines, pamphlets and newspapers came to be reckoned necessities of life ; and the quality of these improved with the greater demand for them. At length, towards the close of the war, when a new generation had grown up, the middle class were better instructed than the highest class, and the charm of aristocracy was gone. Individual Englishmen still revere the distinction of title, still bow and cringe to any one of superior rank, but the English, in general, have lost all reverence for nobility in the abstract ;

just as each individual, who shares in a monopoly, would preserve his own particular means of robbing the public, while all, including monopolists, loudly condemn monopolies in general. During the war, however, while profits were high, while among the middle class almost every man's condition improved year by year, a great majority of that class sided with the government and was opposed to any change in the constitution. But with the peace, came low profits, all sorts of particular distresses and general distress. Thirty or forty millions a year, instead of being squandered in foreign subsidies and distant campaigns, were accumulated at home. As the national capital increased, the now intelligent middle class became more numerous, in proportion to the other classes; but as capital was invested with less and less profit, the state of each individual among the middle class became more and more uneasy. Thus every year produced a great increase of the strength, and the discontent, of the middle class. Touching politics, distress has two very different effects; straining men's attention to their own concerns, and yet disposing them to wish for change in public affairs. In this case, for a long while at least, those who composed each distressed class, when they could think of any thing but how to make the two ends meet at the close of the year, attended only to such public questions as were interesting to their own class in

particular. In examining the petitions presented to the house of commons between the battle of Waterloo and the expulsion of Charles X., it is curious to observe how few, of those which came from the middle-class, asked for reform of parliament. Relief from distress was the prayer of the greater part of those petitions ; agricultural distress, manufacturing distress, commercial distress, and, at last, the distress of the nation. These petitions were utterly neglected ; for the spending class, represented in the house of commons, felt no distress. In the end, the middle class, thus insulted as well as uneasy, came to suspect that there was some radical fault in the constitution.

A more important effect of the French revolution on the English middle class was the disposition which it produced in some of them to improve the condition of the bulk of the people. The slaves of a neighbouring country had revolted, and had acted as slaves in revolt, will always act. The ferocious animals of Labruyère, “ male and female, spread over the country, black, livid, naked, and sun-burnt, fixed to the earth which they stirred and turned with inconceivable obstinacy, having an articulate voice and showing, when they stood upright, a human face, creeping at night into dens, and living on black bread, water and roots ;” these despised brutes had proved what Labruyère had only asserted doubtfully, namely, that they were men and women.

But what a kind of human beings ! Devils, they were called, in human shape, wretches, miscreants, monsters. 'Till then, the English had not suspected that more, a good deal, than half of the people were miserable and dangerous, like starving wolves. Long before then, indeed, Defoe had shown that the condition of the labouring class was as bad in his time as it has ever been since ; but who cared ? Out of evil cometh good. The burnings, drownings and massacres, by which the French populace proved their humanity, led to humanity, in the other sense, amongst the English middle class. Selfishness, being scared, was turned into benevolence. It now became an object with the middle class to improve the physical and moral state of their inferiors. But by what means ? This question was not so easily settled. After much discussion, during which some proposed one thing, some another thing quite different, and some strove to prove by reference to history, that the attempt must fail, it was agreed that Education should be tried. The ruling class, however, and the great amongst the clergy in particular, set their faces against this mode of proceeding. What ! teach the slaves that they were men ! it was a jacobinical project. All the ploughmen would want to be clerks and the journeymen weavers gentlemen. Who would work, slave, for the great, cringe to them, bow down and worship them ? Instruct all the people, and we shall

have helps instead of servants ; teach all men to respect themselves as men, and then what man will be valet to another man, pull off his clothes, and scratch his back when required? No, no—teach the people this, but not more ; to honour and obey the king and all that are put in authority under him, to submit to their governors and spiritual pastors and masters, to order themselves lowly and reverently to all their betters, to labour for their own living (say nothing of ours), and to do their duty in that state of servitude into which it has pleased God to call them. All this teach them, but no more, unless you would turn the world upside down.—Such in substance was the language held up by the ruling class (it would be easy to quote chapter and verse for it) when some of the middle class proposed to instruct all the people. But they were not satisfied with pointing out the danger of educating the populace ; those who sought to instruct the poor, they charged with revolutionary principles, and put a mark on them as jacobins and levellers. Thus many, who wished well to the education project, were deterred from assisting it. A few, chiefly quakers and other sectaries, persevered, and established a limited number of schools for poor children on the plan suggested by Joseph Lancaster. The inventor of the system of Mutual Instruction, wished that no Christians, except Catholics, should be excluded from his schools by

religious scruples ; wherefore, though he used the bible as a school book, it was without note or comment. The high church party now changed their tone. Christian charity required that so great a blessing as education should not be withheld from the poor. And then the hypocrites established schools on the Lancasterian plan, vowing that one of themselves, a Dr. Bell, had brought the system of mutual instruction from India. In their schools, however, which they called national they added note and comment to the bible ; that is, they taught the church of England catechism, which makes slavishness the first duty of man. But this device of the aristocratic clergy was of no avail. Instead of confining instruction, as was intended, to those who should be brought up lowly and reverently to the pastors and masters of the tythe church, it piqued the dissenters, who now took more pains than ever, to teach reading and writing, at least, to those whom the clergy did not teach. In the tythe schools, after all, more than this was not taught. The result of all the teaching put together is, that about half, perhaps near three quarters, of the English poor can read, and a tenth part of them write. The writing was of no use to them, nor the reading either, may be, except as a step. For absolutely nothing was done by any class of teachers to improve the physical condition of the poor. No pains were taken to assist them in turning their

limited knowledge, or rather their means of knowledge, to the best account. Religious tracts were given to them in abundance, but nothing else. In all other respects, what they should learn by means of reading was left to chance. Even had it been otherwise, if the greatest pains had been taken to put useful knowledge in their way, how should they have profited by the boon? they who were condemned to incessant toil and severe physical want. They learned, consequently, little more than what the antijacobins had foreseen that they would learn, to be thoroughly discontented with their lot, and to believe that their misery was owing to bad government. This faith may be true or erroneous: it took root firmly in the minds of the English working class; and from that time forward the physical force of the nation was at enmity with the constitution.

Having stated why and how the English became disposed to alter their constitution, I proceed to describe the manner of the change.

The admirers of the old constitution say, that it had a peculiar knack of adapting itself to new circumstances: the pliability, the elasticity, of the constitution, they call this alledged virtue. Probably the constitution had become stiff from age; but at all events, it did not adapt itself to the new opinions with respect to it, which having sprung up with the French revolution, were checked by the war with revolutionary France,

and have grown steadily and rapidly ever since the battle of Waterloo. Those who managed the constitution obstinately resisted every proposal for altering the venerable machine. But from the moment when a good many people thought of changing the constitution, it no longer worked pleasantly. Instead of only two factions struggling for the management of the constitution, which both factions revered, there arose a third faction, bent on overturning tories, whigs, constitution and all. For many years the reform party was divided into three parties; first, those who attacked the constitution itself; secondly, those who attacked the power which worked the constitution; thirdly, those who attacked both the constitution and the power. The first class, nicknamed Radicals, consisted, for the most part, of work people in the towns and was by far the most numerous; the second class, called Liberals, was composed principally of clever men, belonging to the ruling class and warmly attached to the constitution, but who, lending an ear to the public outcry against jobs and monopolies, thought that they could stretch the constitution to the length of their liberal opinions without even altering its shape; the third class, self-called Utilitarians, comprising, when that name was first heard, not so many perhaps as five hundred individuals, were content to speculate, to reason in the abstract, on all questions of govern-

ment, taking care, however, that their speculations should be published. It would be hard to say which of these classes of reformers was most dangerous to the constitution. The radicals, very numerous and always contemplating the use of physical force, were highly dangerous; for though they were kept down by the physical force of the government, many an accident might any day have given them the advantage. It seems well to observe here, that ever since the poor of England were taught to read, the English have found a standing army absolutely necessary. The liberals were very dangerous, because, not conscious themselves, nor suspected by others, of intending any harm to the constitution, they grubbed at its foundation, blind and unseen, like moles. And the utilitarians were not less dangerous; for by exposing the fiction of three equal powers, balance and harmony, the injustice of dear laws, the uselessness of privileges, the iniquity of jobs and the folly of monopolies, they took the very best method of bringing the constitution into contempt. But whichever of these three classes of reformers was most dangerous to the constitution, no sooner did the whole body of reformers acquire some importance, than there occurred a confusion of parties amongst the ruling class such as may never perhaps be thoroughly understood. Old whigs now leant to toryism; young tories to liberalism; along with the re-

mainder of the whigs, who happened to be out at the time; while some whigs declared for parliamentary reform, and a portion of the tories took the title of conservatives, meaning that they would defend the old constitution in all its parts against all its enemies. In short, public opinion forced a new question into the house of commons: it was no longer which shall be in, the whigs or the tories? but shall the constitution be altered or shall it be preserved? From that moment the constitution could not work well; it was in fact altered, or had begun to break in pieces. Nothing could have saved it but such a war as had saved it before.

At length unconstitutional opinions gained a majority of the house of commons; and the fact was made known when that house, on the death of Lord Liverpool, chose that George Canning should become prime minister. Canning, who had been devoted to the constitution, was now a liberal. His appointment was received with shouts of applause by all classes of reformers, while the conservatives groaned in fear and anger. Still, as yet, the government had performed no act in accordance with the new opinions of the nation. Canning, who well understood his mission, began by some liberal measures with respect to foreign countries; but the conservatives were not blind to this mode, however indirect, of attacking

their beloved constitution : they fell upon Canning and killed him. Then came the Goderich ministry, mixed and liberal, like that of Canning, but wanting an able chief to keep together its heterogeneous materials : for want of a better, it lasted some months, but disjointed and despised ; and was then broken up, partly by the intrigues of the conservatives and still more by its own cowardice and stupidity. One fine morning, the prime minister was not to be found ; when the king, surprised no doubt at the strange working of the constitution, charged his friend, Arthur Duke of Wellington, to form a ministry. Many supposed that the constitution was saved.

By habit, and perhaps by instinct, Wellington was a pure conservative. He had been used to power, he delighted in power, and valued the constitution as it gave power to a few over the many ; but that a mere soldier, so ignorant and even illiterate, should have understood the nature of that most complex machine, it is very difficult to believe. At all events, he humoured the liberal house of commons by taking some liberal colleagues, and soon struck the constitution a mortal blow.

By that constitution, no aboriginal Irishman, that is, catholic, could become a member of the house of commons. A vacancy having taken place in the representation, as it was called, of an

Irish county, the aborigines of that county met, and in defiance of the law elected a native Irishman. What was to be done? Thirty years sooner, the armed protestants, that is colonists, of Ireland, aided by an English army, would have settled the question in double quick time; and Wellington, an Irish colonist, a soldier who had once governed the native Irish on the spot, would have been the man of all others to put down such a rebellion by force of arms. The Irish, who as a people, seem deficient in courage, would probably have submitted to force, as they have often submitted before to a handful of English soldiers; but this time there was something to manage in England; a thing that never was managed by force. Public opinion, acting on the house of commons, had disposed that assembly, as any corporal might see, to sympathise with the Irish rebels. The temper of the house of commons putting a massacre of the Irish out of question, there remained for Wellington only a choice of evils; on the one side, concession to rebels and a repeal of the law which excluded catholics from parliament, with a certainty that that great monopoly-job, the English church establishment in Ireland, would be next destroyed; on the other side, resignation, loss of power, with the certainty that some other minister would ere long carry a catholic relief bill. Wellington decided like a brave and ambitious man, as he is. All at

once he became more popular than Canning had ever been. Himself had declared shortly before, that he must be mad to think of being prime minister. To what special incapacity he referred we cannot tell : though all, save the conservatives, agreed with him at the time, he now became, except with the conservatives, the most humane, the most liberal, the wisest of men. The conservatives had looked to him for saving the constitution. When, therefore, he led so outrageous an attack upon it, they were ready to devour him ; but they could not break his heart, which is rather hard, as they, aided by him, had broken poor Canning's, which was of a fine texture. Nay, he converted the greater part of them to his own views by saying—Support me or resign ; and as for the remainder, they were so few that he thought he might safely despise them : a mistake as it turned out.

However, a relief bill was passed, large, complete, not open to an objection from the revolutionists, except as it excluded from parliament, for one year, that popular Irishman, whom the natives had elected against law. This personal clause, being attributed to the spite of an underling, a violent anti-catholic, who had supported the bill to keep his place ; mean as this clause was, it did not detract from Wellington's popularity. Humane, liberal, wise, when he proposed the bill, he was now the greatest statesman

of his age or any age ; he had won a civic crown more durable than his martial laurels ; his name would go down to posterity as one of the greatest benefactors of his country and mankind. These are some of the terms, in which his grace was thanked for his part in the first obvious blow given to the old English constitution.

Revolutions are terrible, but in one point of view seem better than great political changes conducted without violence. After a revolution comes peace ; after a great peaceful change comes, very often, revolution. The leaders in great but peaceful political changes are, commonly, unwilling actors, who act from necessity, all their opinions remaining unchanged ; who yield this, merely to preserve that ; and who, therefore, proceed without regard to consequences ; as if the single concession were to be a final measure, were to have no consequences. It was just so with those who managed the repeal of the Irish slave-code.

A breathing time followed that act ; a pause, during which England was governed, not by a constitution, but by the individual duke of Wellington. If his grace had not been blinded by his flatterers, he would have seen from the popularity of the once hated Canning, from his own popularity, and above all, from the confidence which the nation reposed in him, the resolute, slashing reformer ; from all this, I say, he would

have perceived the absolute necessity of moving on with the work of reform. The reformers, giving the field marshal credit for common discernment, believed that he would move on, and thought it wise to let him alone; the house of commons appeared to have abandoned its functions to a dictator; some of the conservatives merely sulked; and some, not knowing what to do, called out, for what? for a reform of the house of commons.*

Rulers and nations have often deceived each other, but never so completely as the English people deceived Wellington, and Wellington deceived the English people, for some time after the passing of the relief bill. Wellington thought that the people were entirely satisfied with what had been done; and the people doubted not that Wellington was hatching some grand plot against the constitution. An accident suddenly opened the eyes of both parties.

At the end of 1830, the French constitution, which had never worked well, stopped entirely for a few days. The French king and the citizens of Paris came to blows; the king being

* An article in the Quarterly Review, published just *before* the expulsion of Charles X., and when the question of reform in parliament seemed to possess no interest for Englishmen, exposed very ably some of the greatest defects of the house of commons, as a legislative assembly.

beaten, was driven away ; his cousin, after giving some faithless promises to alter the constitution, was appointed king ; and then the constitution of Waterloo, slightly altered, creaked on as before.

The new French king, and the French whigs, call this a glorious revolution ; but it did not occupy a fortnight, and it ended in no greater change than would have happened if the old king had died in his bed without male issue. On the face of it, therefore, one can see nothing that should have produced a great sensation in England ; still less such violent political excitement as actually occurred. As respects England, what new political principles were brought to light by the Parisian “ three days ” ? The right of resistance to tyrants ? no, for that principle was acknowledged, nay consecrated, by the oligarchy of boroughmongers. The right of tax payers to vote taxes, which was the principle of the American revolution ? by no means. The right to be without a government, which seems to have been the principle of the first French revolution ? certainly not ; for the Parisian workmen who expelled Charles X., fought in the name of the Waterloo charter. Well, then, why after the Parisian three days were the work-people of the English towns so deeply agitated ? Why did the ruling class exhibit so much terror ? Why did nineteenth-twentieths of the press demand, all of a sudden, an immediate and effectual reform of

the house of commons? Why did Mr. Brougham declare that he had prepared a plan of reform in parliament; he who had not mentioned the subject for years, except to deride the radical reformers? Why was he elected member for Yorkshire? Why was Mr. Hunt elected for Preston, spite of the house of Stanley, in their own borough? Why was parliament, which for years had scarcely received a petition for reform, now overwhelmed with such petitions? Why did Wellington utter his famous eulogy of rotten boroughs? Why did he, the popular dictator, resign in dudgeon, if not in a fright? Why did Wellington and the conservatives make up their quarrel? What brought the whigs, the proud, careless, lazy and suspected, whigs into office? and why did those whigs introduce a bill of reform, which was to cut through the stem of the constitution? A single word answers all these questions,—barricades! The principle of the poor dupes who conquered at Paris, was attachment to a constitution, which gives all the powers of government to less than two hundred thousand persons out of thirty-two millions; but then the three days of Paris made, and made known, this very important discovery,—that there is a way by which the populace of a large town may beat the best of soldiers. Not one gentleman took part with the populace of Paris: a general, since a minister, and still a favourite of the new

king, being asked to lead them, said,—pooh ! the rabble, the *canaille* ! Such was the opinion of military men, of all men, concerning the relative force of mobs and household troops. All at once, opinion as to this matter ran into the other extreme. In England, cannon balls became as nothing compared with pavement stones ; strapping guardsmen looked like dwarfs, and the smallest artizan was a giant. This new faith produced the most general and violent agitation ever known in England, without bloodshed. The workmen of the towns used to shake hands when they met in public, though they had parted not an hour before, and expected to meet again during the day ; and then, when one of their leaders did but talk of workmen at Paris, tears ran down their unwashed checks, and they shook hands again, this time with an earnest grasp. The work-people in the country, not so well informed on foreign affairs, and more secret in their ways, appeared gloomy and savage. All the other classes, nobility, clergy, gentry, placeholders, stockholders, manufacturers, merchants and tradesmen, were disturbed by one of two extreme sentiments ; either fear amounting to terror, or hope equal to joy. Such of them as admired the constitution turned pale when you mentioned barricades, and used to skulk about with down-cast looks, as if some great misfortune had befallen them. The others, if whigs, were in high

spirits; that is, certain of coming in; and, if downright enemies of the constitution, of rotten boroughs, privileges, dear law, jobs and monopolies; these, I say, never met but with sparkling eyes, to laugh and brag over the prospect.

The effects of a given power may be small or great, according to the susceptibility of the matter on which the power acts. The discovery of barricades could not have affected the whole English nation so deeply, or perhaps at all, if that nation had been contented with its political institutions. The physical discovery of the Parisians led to this great political discovery in England; that the nation had outgrown its laws. What followed might have been foretold, nay as to its main features was foretold, by careful observers.

The rural paupers, the serfs, of England rebelled; and the farmers, who down to that time had been reckoned warm friends of the constitution, notwithstanding their distress, appeared to sympathise with the rebels. Thus about a third of England was more or less in a state of insurrection, without any physical means of restoring order. Whilst fires were blazing and mobs exacting higher wages in the country, a new king met a new parliament; and Wellington, the popular dictator, the wisest of statesmen, wisely seized that opportunity to declare solemnly in favour of the most perfect constitution ever

framed by the ingenuity of man. In one day, all the duke's popularity was gone. The most humane, liberal, clear-sighted of men, the greatest statesman, the benefactor of his country and mankind, became, all in one day, observe, hard-hearted, narrow-minded, wooden-headed, every thing worthless. The suddenness of Wellington's fall in the public esteem shows the extent to which he had deceived the nation, and they him.

While the shout of execration was at its height, the day arrived when the king and his ministers had engaged to dine at Guildhall with the citizens of London. Wellington advised the king not to attend the feast. As the king was very popular at the time; and popular, be it said in passing, because his bearing towards the populace presented a striking contrast with the haughty reserve of his late brother; this being the case, it was supposed by some, that Wellington's advice to the king had been dictated by personal fear. This charge, brought against one who probably never was afraid, is not worth refuting. Why then, make the populace believe that the government was afraid of them? Because the government was afraid of the populace; not the ministers on account of their own persons, but every member of the government on account of the constitution; terrified at the thought of barricades. Would the presence of ministers in the city have raised barricades? There was great

risk of it, to say the least ; and if barricades had been raised, who shall tell where the insurrection would have stopped ? Considering the inflamed state of the peasantry, and of the workmen in the towns throughout England and Scotland ; considering, further, the extremely artificial state of English society, the great number of people who live from hand to mouth by pursuits not agricultural, the influence of confidence and credit in feeding those people, and the crash that would have followed if any thing had occurred to disturb seriously the ordinary course of industry and trade ; bearing all this in mind, we shall conclude, that Wellington acted prudently in avoiding the city feast. Still the breach of the king's engagement with the citizens was treated as a great popular triumph, which indeed it was ; and Wellington, who till then had been feared as much as hated, was now despised. I do not give too much importance to the failure of a city feast. In the progress of revolutions, great events seem to hinge upon trifles. Some aldermen missed a dinner ; but this was the first time when the friends of the old English constitution showed any fear of its enemies.

The dinner things were hardly removed from Guildhall, when the house of commons objected to the new civil list, which Wellington proposed for the new king. Owing to the confusion of parties which had now taken place, above fifty

conservatives voted against the duke and the constitution : *Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat*. They would have voted for reform of parliament the next day, when Mr. Brougham, moved by the barricades of Paris, was to have brought forward a plan for mending the constitution ; but Wellington resigned, Mr. Brougham's motion fell to the ground, and the whigs came in, giving three great pledges to the nation. They promised, first, to maintain peace ; which, as there was no war, nor prospect of war, meant that they would not get up a war to divert the nation from its purpose of reform : secondly, they promised retrenchment, that is, to diminish the power which had moved the constitution ; and thirdly, a full and effectual reform of the house of commons, meaning a great change in the constitution itself.

The people were overjoyed, but not disposed to confide implicitly in the whigs, who had often deceived the people, and who, as members of the aristocracy, were suspected of a strong attachment to the oligarchy of boroughmongers. The people, therefore, formed themselves into societies for promoting reform, and, partly by petitions, but still more by means of the press, told ministers what the nation understood by full "and effectual." Above all, they threatened openly, in so many words, that if the whigs should offer them a mock reform, they would take a revolution. At length, on the memorable 1st of March, 1831, the whig

cabinet produced their bill, themselves alone being aware of its contents until it was laid before the house of commons.

An abstract of the whig bill would not describe it so well as an account of its reception by the three great parties which then divided the country.

The conservatives, including those who had quarrelled with Wellington on account of catholic relief, were delighted with the bill : they chuckled, and laughed, and clapped their hands. Was there ever, said they, any thing so extravagant? The whigs must be mad. Thank God, they had gone far enough. Such a bill ! revolutionary was too good an epithet for it. So ridiculous, so preposterous, a bill would not be read a first time. The whigs must resign ; they had cut their own throats ; nothing could be better.

The feeling of the moderate reformers was expressed by one of the richest men in England, a whig, but leaning to utilitarian opinions.* He declared in the house of commons, that the bill took away his breath. Perhaps he was affected, not so much by the bill itself, as by the evidence, which the introduction of such a bill by the cabinet furnished, of the force of the popular will.

The decided enemies of the constitution having carefully examined the bill, said—It is a good first step : pass it, pass it !

* Mr. John Smith, the banker, of London.

In a week there were but two parties ; enemies of the bill or anti-reformers, and friends of the bill or reformers. The conservatives made up all their quarrels, seeking only to throw out the bill : the whigs and reformers forgot all their differences, bent only on passing the bill. But, what is more remarkable, the conservatives now called themselves reformers, and the reformers swore that they were conservatives.

The house of commons, thinking with the conservatives that the whigs had indeed gone too far, would not pass the bill. The press, representing the nation, stormed for a general election, and the whigs dissolved parliament. In the general election, the conservatives were signally defeated. In vain did they, by pointing out that the bill would disfranchise many poor men, try to enlist the physical force on their side ; in vain did they declare for reform generally, pressing their hands on their hearts and vowing that they had never been friendly to abuses ; in vain also did they put forward images of revolution, confiscation and bloodshed : it was all in vain ; they were beaten wherever it was possible, by means of unions, subscriptions, the king's name, brick-bats, and a single pledge,—“the bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill.” .

Parliament was already reformed. The new house of commons would have passed the bill in a month, if the whigs had proposed such a course.

In that case, probably, the lords would have wanted courage to reject the bill, and the constitution might have appeared to reform itself. But the whigs, deliberately as it seems, managed matters so that the bill was eventually carried by physical force. By encouraging opposition to the bill in the commons, by carefully promoting discussion and delay, the whigs restored the habitual insolence of the conservatives, who had been subdued by the general election; and, when the bill found its weary way into the lords, every body, the whigs alone excepted, knew that their lordships would reject it.

There was yet a way of passing the bill constitutionally; that is, by a creation of peers. Such a measure might even have revived a belief in the beautiful harmony of the constitution. But the whigs seem to have been bent on giving importance to the physical force. Though all, who wished the inevitable revolution to take place without violence, implored the whigs to create peers, they pursued their wilful way; and the lords rejected the bill.

If the whigs, afraid of their own bill, imagined that its rejection by the lords would enable them to satisfy the people with a less effectual reform, they were soon undeceived. The reformers now put forward images of revolution, confiscation and bloodshed; political unions were formed in London and the agricultural districts, where

hitherto they had not been thought of; the expediency, rather than the lawfulness, of refusing to pay taxes, was now openly discussed at public meetings and by the press; and the blindest might see, that the people were about to take the question of reform into their own hands. The whigs, however blind, saw this, and promised that the bill should pass unaltered. No one doubted that they had made up their minds to create peers; and the fury of the people subsided.

As the rejected bill could not be brought forward again in the same session, parliament was prorogued and re-assembled. This time, a week might have sufficed for passing the bill in the commons. The whigs thought fit to discuss it all over again with the conservatives; and this farce, from which the people turned in disgust, lasted near half a year. Still no peers were created; and at length suspicion began to fall upon the king, who till now had been the most popular of English monarchs.

Once more the bill was taken to the lords, who boldly declared that they would not pass it. Make peers! peers or a revolution! was now the cry all over England, Scotland and Ireland. Some whigs hurried to Windsor and advised the king to make peers. His majesty, who, there seems no doubt, would have said, yes, if the proposal had been made six months earlier, was pleased, in his royal wisdom, to say, no. The whigs, who

were never wanting in pride, resigned ; and field marshal the duke of Wellington became once more, in name at least, prime-minister of England.

The conservatives, now thought to govern England by the sword. For ten days England was governed by newspapers and political unions. It was not an interregnum, as some have said, but a good strong government, orderly too, and like that of the United States, a government which gave immediate effect to the public will. How the king, the lords, the new minister *and* the ex-ministry settled the matter amongst them, has never been told ; but after the political unions and newspapers had governed vigorously for ten days, the whigs got in again, and the lords, civilly, humbly, in haste and without even a wry face, passed the whole bill. In one word, the new constitution of England was obtained by physical force. The conservatives said it should be so ; and so it was.

I have dwelt so long on the manner of the late change in the English constitution, because it appears more important with a view to the future than the change itself. But, though the change itself, if it were to be judged by the elections which have taken place according to the reform bill, would not appear very important ; though it would appear trifling if estimated by the paltry reforms of abuses which have thus far resulted

from it ; still it has, to all intents and purposes, produced a new constitution, as will be seen in the long run. Some of those to whom the reform bill gives the right of voting for members of parliament, were prevented by a trick* from exercising their franchise; others were deterred from voting by the fear of offending their landlords and rich customers; these two classes together being so numerous, that fewer persons, it is believed, voted at the late election than at the last election of an unreformed parliament. Some again, and not a few, were induced by bribery or intimidation, to vote for conservative candidates, while many would have voted for better candidates, if better there had been. In fact, the late general election took place when the nation, fatigued with two years of violent excitement, was in a state of exhaustion. But, though the result of that election be a house of commons, which does not appear to differ materially from the houses that were got together under the old constitution, still there can be no doubt, that a majority of its members are responsible to their constituents, or that they will be made to feel their responsibility; whether at the next general election or sooner, is not a very

* By fixing so early a day for the payment of taxes already due, such payment being one qualification for voting, that many electors were taken by surprize and missed the right of voting at the next general election.

important question, considering the certainty, almost, of a general election within three or four years. But, at all events, whenever the class, to which the reform bill gives the right of voting for members of parliament, shall choose to exert themselves, they will direct the government of England. The constitution is changed, howsoever little evidence of the change may be furnished by the composition, or the acts, of the first reformed parliament. The present, then, is worth but little attention, when compared with the future. Those who, taking the narrowest view of affairs, treat the present as if there were neither a past nor a future, may be pleased or dissatisfied with things as they are; but the prospects of the English, as a nation, will not be discovered by discussing present party politics. Let us, therefore, having looked back, now look forward; steadily, without affection or fear, so as to form just opinions on a subject in which are interested, not the English alone, but also the French, the Germans, the Poles, trampled on and scattered, every one, of whatever country, who rejoices in the progress of civilization, every friend of liberty in the world, every miserable slave if he did but know it, and all the oppressors, as they may learn too late.

The new constitution is neither an oligarchy or a democracy. In what then is to consist the force of the government?

An oligarchy may be maintained either by sol-

diers or corruption. Soldiers are out of the case in England ; for with no other force to maintain the government, hundreds of thousands would be required, while it is hardly doubtful that, ere long, those who can, when they please, direct the government, will insist on a diminution of the army. And, as to corruption, it is easy to see, first, that the jobs and monopolies which were insufficient to preserve the old constitution, would, if maintained, be entirely thrown away upon the much greater number who can now vote for members of parliament ; secondly, that the new government of the uneasy class will lose no time in cutting away jobs and monopolies. The whig ministry lately declared, that the government of England should no longer be carried on by patronage : they will be made to keep their word, sooner or later.

A democracy requires neither guards nor corruption, being supported by the affection of the whole people. But the new constitution excludes from legislative power a great majority of the people, the whole body, we may say, of the working classes : it must want the force which maintains a democracy.

Thus, on the most general grounds, we may conclude, that the new constitution will not last ; but let us come to particulars.

By the new constitution, instead of three, there are but two orders in the state. Power has been

taken from what was the highest class, and the mockery of power from what was the lowest class. We must now speak only of two orders, the higher and the lower, the rulers and the governed.

Who formed this mongrel government? Who bestowed the power of legislation upon too many for an oligarchy, too few for a democracy? Was it the class who now, on paper, at least, are omnipotent? Certainly not. Could they have extorted the new charter, unaided by those whom it does not acknowledge? Certainly not. The reform bill was carried by physical force; and those who compose the physical force know this, are proud of it, boast of it, and will never forget it. Did they approve of the bill? As a step, yes; but merely as a step, declaring that they had rather no bill than this bill, if it were to be a final measure. Universal suffrage, was, is, and will be, the object of the working classes. Assemble a body of them, and say—Is a pauper, an ignorant, hungry, gloomy slave, qualified to choose who shall make the laws? No, they will answer; but with universal suffrage the law makers will take care that there be no paupers: universal suffrage we consider a security, the only security, for universal ease, instruction and content. But, good people, with universal suffrage, you, the working class, who form so great a majority, would be the only class represented in parliament; you would

make laws for the sake of your class alone, laws not good, perhaps bad, for the other classes.— They reply: That is the very point: your objection to universal suffrage is our objection to a limited suffrage: the higher class, we fear, will make laws for the sake of themselves alone, laws not good, perhaps bad, for us. Besides, we are told continually by the classes above us, that what is good for them must be good for us: we think so; and therefore, say we, let all vote for the good of all. Are we ignorant? instruct us: discontented? mend our condition: dishonest; you say; give us rights and enjoyments to value. Universal suffrage, we believe, will do all this; but at any rate, we, who know our strength, are resolved to try the experiment.

Such is the feeling of the working classes. Will the middle or uneasy class attempt to preserve their monopoly of power? Not without great dishonesty; for they owe their charter to the working class, who won it for them on a complete understanding, that it should be a step, and nothing but a step, in reform. The physical force, exhausted by three years of excitement, has not yet asked for an extension of the suffrage. Until this demand shall be made, nothing may happen to disturb the subsisting union between the middle and the working classes; but when the demand shall be made, if it be resisted, if the petitions of the majority be met by counter peti-

tions from the select few, then must a violent quarrel take place between the two classes. Traitors and knaves would be the merited terms bestowed on the minority. But minorities, when power is in question, are deaf to the voice of reproach. If the new constituency should have nothing to fear except bad names, they would not, probably, compel their representatives to extend the franchise; but we shall readily perceive, that the majority have a better assurance of good faith in the minority, than the right to call them traitors and knaves.

The rulers and the governed will no longer be separated by an intervening class. Except in political power, the less rich of the ruling order are on a level with the less poor of the subject order. None of the circumstances can exist, which formerly placed the physical force at the disposal of those who made the laws. A daily and familiar intercourse must take place between the two orders; and whatever the inferior order may suffer, they will attribute to the selfishness or malice of the others. In the next place, the property and persons of the new ruling order are at the mercy of the new subject order. Not that the position of the poorest class, as to the persons and property of the other classes, is changed, but the poorest class may now have a motive for attacking persons and property which were always at their mercy. By the old consti-

tution, power was given^e to individual wealth ; by the new one, the aggregate of wealth will be represented. Instead of one very rich man possessing great power, fifty persons of moderate wealth will possess some power. Now the person and property of a great boroughmonger were not endangered by any sudden anger of the poor towards him ; but a farmer, a manufacturer, a dealer of whatever kind almost, to whom the new charter gives the suffrage, must live by day and night in the midst of the excluded, and his property must at all times be subject to attacks from them. It is well known that the richer class of people at Preston would have returned the heir of the house of Stanley at the election of 1830, rather than that very ignorant and foolish demagogue Mr. Hunt, if they had not been afraid of the populace : they were afraid that their factories would be burned, if they should take part against the popular candidate. In 1830, just after the three days of Paris, the higher order at Preston had a foretaste of what the elective bodies of all such towns may expect, whenever the lower order shall be in state of excitement. That the voters for county members should be affected in the same way, seems probable, when one reflects that in a good part of the south of England wages have been raised and kept up by means of stack burning.

If it were to come to a trial of strength between the two parties in open warfare (which God forbid!) the result must inevitably be favourable to the great majority. Retrenchment, which, amongst other things, means fewer soldiers, is one of the great objects of the new ruling class. Besides, the education, as some call it, of the poor has had this good effect,—that soldiers, though taken from the most degraded class, have now some feeling for other people, as well as some political notions, amongst which is a suspicion that, in time perhaps, officers may be taken from the ranks. Already the new parliament has declared, in opposition to the whig cabinet, against the flogging of soldiers. Without flogging, degraded men cannot be made to observe military discipline; and with the end of flogging, therefore, must come a better selection of men for soldiers. Thus, as the moral character of the soldiers shall improve, as they shall learn to respect themselves, they will learn also to respect others; and it will become more and more difficult to employ them in keeping down the bulk of the people. A national guard has been talked of for the protection of the new ruling order; but a national guard, from which the hardy poor were excluded, would be, as anti-jacobin Wyndham said of the armed shopkeepers forty years ago, a great depository of panic. Moreover, there is the discovery of barricades;

on which, however, I for one set less value than most people, except as it will maintain the confidence of the poorer order in their own strength.

But a trial of strength between the two orders is highly improbable. The proceedings by which the reform bill was carried show, that the government of England is liable to dictation from the physical force, whenever that force chooses to exert itself. I say England, because the liability in question depends on a state of political economy, which is peculiar to England. In no country does so large a proportion of the people live from hand to mouth by pursuits not agricultural. In America, in Ireland, in any of the states of Europe, except Holland perhaps, a pretty general insurrection of the poorer class might take place, and might even last some time, without producing very serious consequences. Supposing it to produce a temporary stagnation, or even stoppage, of credit and business, still most of the people would have food at hand, while the remainder, being few in proportion to the producers of food, might be victualled without much difficulty. But in England, where the proportion of rural population is so small, where such great masses of the people are congregated out of the way of obtaining food, save by the regular course of industry, and where, by reason of the most comprehensive combination of power and the

most minute distribution of employments, the regular course of industry depends so much upon confidence and credit; there, I say, any social convulsion, if it should last but a week, must produce a series of convulsions, one more violent than the other. Stop, for but three days, the course of credit, trade and industry, which feeds the population of the great towns in England, and in three days more that population would be frantic: it is needless to dwell on the consequences. But how easily, does it appear, might such a stoppage occur, when one reflects on the sensitive nature of credit, on the misery and discontent of the poorer order, on their common object, and, above all, on their just apprehension of the means by which the new constitution was torn from the old oligarchy. During the interregnum, as it is called, of 1831, the walls of London, Manchester, Birmingham, and other great towns, were placarded in these words—"To stop the duke, go for gold." The people, by means of their savings' banks, did go for gold to the bank of England; and so did help, at least, to stop the duke. Some of his friends, selfish mad-men, who thought their own property in land secure at all events, and some tory underlings whose obscurity was a kind of protection to them, would have braved this attack upon credit; but the new ruling order, whose daily bread rests upon industry, trade and credit, to whom the

right of voting is as nothing when compared with peace and order, will never, we may believe, provoke a serious disturbance.

From all these considerations, only one conclusion can be drawn ; namely, that the new aristocracy have no existence but on paper ; that if gratitude, and a sense of honour, should not impel them to extend the suffrage, if they should be deaf to reproach and to such reasoning as is here presented to them, they must yield, nevertheless, to force or fear, sooner or later.

Let us suppose the new ruling class wise in time ; that having wrested power from an oligarchy by means of the physical force, they admit all men to an equal share in the power of making laws. That would be a pure democracy. In a democracy, the laws are made by the greatest number. In England, the greatest number consists of labourers, poor, discontented and ignorant. The laws of England, then, would be made for the supposed advantage of the poor. To a very poor man, whose sole property was his labour, who by constant labour was able to earn not more than enough to support a miserable existence, whose only prospect was want in his old age and a career of wretchedness for his children ; to a man in this condition, laws, which should cause a revolution of property, would appear the best. Generous minds, full of sympathy for the miserable and a love of equality, may be blind to this conclusion ; others, bigoted in at-

tachment to democracy, may deny its truth, which, however, is plain to those who think as well as feel, and think without prejudice. Even now, some disposition is shown, aye even by the intelligent but uneasy class, to make laws which would be most unjust to the owners of some kinds of property. I allude to the proposed depreciation of money, which, in proportion to its extent, would diminish the receipts of those who are entitled to fixed payments. But if uneasiness put such notions into the heads of the new ruling order, what may be expected from the misery of those who would govern under the future democracy? The question is answered by reference to arguments used in support of the plan for depreciating the value of money. "A great robbery," say the advocates of depreciation "was committed thirteen years ago by the vile borough-mongers, who, by raising the value of money, enabled all creditors to exact from their debtors more than was due: we now propose an act of justice, by returning to the standard in which so many contracts were made, in which, above all, great part of the national debt was incurred; but not of complete justice, since this measure will not give back to its rightful owners that which has been wrongfully taken from them during thirteen years." Unquestionably, during thirteen years, many receivers of fixed payments have obtained more, and a great deal more, than they ever con-

tracted to receive ; but during the thirteen years many new contracts have been made ; and if the value of money were now restored to the old standard, the creditors under these new contracts would be cheated, just as debtors were cheated before. To repair one great robbery, therefore, another great robbery is proposed. That the robbery which has been perpetrated was the work of the “ vile boroughmongers ” may be true ; but see to what this argument leads. “ Every work of plunder performed by the vile boroughmongers is liable to be overhauled ; ” say you so ? Then what becomes of the national debt ? Was the capital, of which the interest is now paid by the nation, spent for the good of the nation ? Was it not squandered, or rather cunningly laid out, for the preservation of boroughmongering ? Did the nation agree to replace that capital, or to pay thirty millions a year for ever ? When that debt, miscalled national, was contracted, the nation had no voice in public affairs. It follows, that the nation is not bound to pay a debt which was incurred by a faction for anti-national purposes. Nay, further, if every arrangement of the boroughmongers is to be vitiated by proof of its injustice, to whom belong those great estates, which have been kept together by means of provisions out of the public purse, for daughters and younger sons ? To the nation, which has paid for them over and over again, by salaries to those amongst whom

they must otherwise have been divided. Once acknowledge the principle on which some of the uneasy class now propose to alter the value of money, and there would be no end of confiscation. But this principle, which "men of property and education," being uneasy, are not afraid to assert, would be all in all with a legislature moved by the wretched. Nor can one deny, having regard to nothing but the truth, that many of those, who actually compose the poorer order in England, would gain immensely, by sponging out the national debt, abolishing tythes, and converting all the great estates into national property, which should be sold piecemeal at the rate of twenty shillings per acre. The example of France is before us. At this time, indeed, the poorer order in France is very miserable; but those who composed that order fifty years ago, the wild animals of Labruyère, were deeply indebted to confiscation; and I have spoken here only of that portion of the English poor, who should obtain land, debt free and tythe free, for twenty shillings per acre.

But now turn to the other side of the picture. How many comfortable people must be made wretched, by such a transfer of property as would make some of the wretched comfortable! The general transfer of property from the rich to the poor, which took place in France, may have been consistent with the principle of utility, the greatest

happiness of the greatest number ; but in the present social state of England, any large measure of confiscation would injure the majority. So barbarous was the state of industry in France half a century back, so many checks to production did the state of property occasion, that a general transfer of property, by removing those checks and by stimulating industry, led at once to an increase of production : property had changed hands, but the nation was richer than before. In England, on the contrary, where millions of people have, one may say, been called into existence by machinery, where capital does so much more than labour, where production has been carried so far, and depends so closely on the use of large masses of capital in combination, where the relations of industry are become so complicated and delicate ; here any legislative attack upon property would cause a decrease of production. If property were rendered insecure in England, capital, that it was possible to hoard, would be hoarded ; capital, that was not fixed, would be moved to other countries. That very skilful application of capital, that most productive application of labour, which enables less than one third of the English people to raise food for the remainder, depends on security of property. The great steam-power of England would be next to annihilated, if property should become insecure. Thus, with respect to England, confiscation is

synonymous with destruction. Make a scramble for property in England, and the best part of the thing to be scrambled for would disappear. One may imagine the result ; the scenes of contention and suffering, which must end in England's ruin ; which might make England a hunting field, or a place fit to receive convicts from America. But I pass on, with a hope that some other, having words at command, may describe the prospect as plainly as I now see it. Who is there that does not see it, clearly or vaguely ? Why do we hear continually in England of apprehensions for the future, all the more serious for not being exactly defined ? And who, that will take the trouble to think on this subject, but acknowledges the blackness of the prospect ?

Still, fearful as is the prospect, great as the danger appears, there may be a way of escape. The danger being thoroughly understood, some means of averting it may be discovered. The English are not apt to despond. In knowledge, judgement and moral courage, they surpass all other nations, according to my humble opinion. But this occasion will tax their best qualities to the uttermost. In England, it is no longer a speculation whether democracy be consistent with high civilization. This is the experiment which the English are about to try. Who is there that does not wish them success ? If they should succeed, then all the talk about the difference

between old and new countries will go for nothing, any where ; and, in time, the greatest happiness of all will be every where secured : if they should fail, misery and vice will be deemed the natural lot of the greatest part of mankind ; and the world, save as England may suffer by the experiment, must go on as before. A single error may cause the failure of this great experiment. It becomes, therefore, the duty of every man, who has reflected on the subject, to make known his view of the best course of proceeding.

The misery and ignorance of the bulk of the English people render them unfit to enjoy, or rather fit them to abuse, a great extension of the suffrage. If their circumstances were as easy as those of the working class in America, they might be better instructed than American workmen (whose solitary mode of life is very unfavourable to learning) and therefore better qualified to take part in choosing the legislature. In that case, there would be no objection to universal suffrage, every thing in its favour remaining as at present.

Admitting this, two practical questions arise.

First—Is it possible, that arrangements should be made, to render the English working class comfortable, satisfied, and as wise, at least, as the working class in America ?

Secondly—Is it possible, that such arrangements should be made in time ? Or, in other

words, may universal suffrage be postponed until such arrangements shall have produced the desired effect; until, that is, the whole people shall be qualified, by ease, content and knowledge, to vote for members of parliament?

Let both of these questions be answered in the affirmative; and it will appear that democracy may be established in England without the least check to civilization, without the least injury to any, with the greatest benefit to all: decide either of these questions in the negative, and England becomes, first a field of battle, and then a waste, compared with the present.

The latter of these questions, though by much the less difficult to answer, takes precedence in the order of time. The subject class may presently demand universal suffrage; and they have the means either of enforcing their demand, or of producing that convulsion to which universal suffrage may lead, if it should come too soon. Resistance, then, to the demand for universal suffrage might be the shortest and the worst way to universal suffrage. Which is the longest, and therefore the best, way to the end of a journey that must, at all events, be performed either quickly or slowly? But, though delay, postponement, be the object, there is not a year to lose. To hesitate about taking the long and the safe course, would be like a decision in favour of the short and dangerous one. This is why the means

of postponing universal suffrage without serious disturbance, deserve to be considered before measures for rendering universal suffrage safe if not desirable.

Admitting that a demand for universal suffrage would be irresistible if made in earnest, there appears but one way of postponing universal suffrage; namely, by preventing the demand for it. Force being out of the question, may not the bulk of the people be persuaded to abstain from demanding that, which, after a while, they might receive as a matter of course? Government, said lately a young whig nobleman when speaking of Ireland, must be feared in order to be loved. He meant, of course, in order to be obeyed; and the sentiment was not so monstrous, considering the ignorance, cowardice and slavishness, of the long oppressed people of Ireland. But the English have been "educated;" they are a brave, though not a martial race; and they are bent on moving onwards to democracy or ruin. Their government may fear them; but fear will not make them submit to their government. For the first time in Europe, the people must be guided if at all, by persuasion and kindness. What these may effect is now the question.

The actors in this case must be a majority of the reformed house of commons, as soon as that house shall truly represent property in the aggre-

gate. Let us suppose the house of commons so constituted, anxious to persuade, not force, the poorer orders to abstain from demanding universal suffrage. In that case, what would the house do? what would it leave undone? what would be its principle of action?

In that case, the representatives of the richer order would adopt this principle of action:—*Such legislation as must take place, if parliament had been chosen by universal suffrage, all the people being fit to exercise the right of voting.* Jeremy Bentham would have called it the postponement-of-universal-suffrage principle: its efficiency will be seen by noticing a few of its inevitable consequences.

1. Some radical member proposes, that buildings and other objects of curiosity, the property of the nation, should be open to the public without payment. How would the house decide? Would they let the poor visit Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's and the Tower? or would they, like former parliaments, vote for the "vested rights" of deans and door-keepers? According to the above principle, the decision would be in favour of a right which has long been withheld from the poor. If parliament had been elected by universal suffrage, all the electors being fit to chuse representatives, a proposal to this effect would be adopted as soon as made. Such a measure, pal-

try as it might seem to "great statesmen," would go some way in persuading the poor to abstain from demanding universal suffrage.

2. Another radical observes, that the parks at the west end of London are very pleasant to the rich who live near them; that the poor, who crowd the east end of London, would find a park in their neighbourhood very pleasant; and that it would be easy to give them one, not an atom of enjoyment being taken from the rich. By a parliament in which all were represented, the proposal would be received with acclamations. And why not a park for the smoke-dried people of Manchester, who at present can breathe fresh air, only by tramping up and down a dusty or muddy road? Joseph Hume complains of the expense. The abolition of a few sinecures would settle that point. If, however, public funds may not be diverted to public purposes, if no public money is to be spent for the comfort of any but the rich, then let the rich pay for universal suffrage: you would find it a dear bargain, Mr. Hume.

3. A third democratic conservative suggests, that the cost of postage for letters shall be defrayed by the government; that the poor as well as the rich shall send and receive letters free of postage. What! extend to all the privilege of franking? Yes; and because, for one reason, you would destroy the privilege by extending it. In

America, universal suffrage promises to establish universal freedom of postage ; and we are supposing the English parliament to legislate as if it had been elected by universal suffrage. But the frightful expense ! the Americans are not frightened at the expense ; but they have no great army to support ; nor would the English have to support a great army if the poorer order were gratified by such measures as this. Moreover, one might easily prove that a remission of taxes equal to the cost of this measure, would be far less advantageous to the public than this measure however costly. But, at all events, as this measure would be approved by a parliament representing all, all being fit to be represented, so therefore, would a parliament, chosen only by the richer order, approve of it, having regard to the postponement-of-universal-suffrage principle.

This principle is not new : it is eighteen hundred years old at least ; meaning, *do as you would be done by*. For proclaiming this principle, Christ was crucified, Paul striped, and Sidney beheaded. For neglecting this principle, England was punished by losing the affection of America, the French nobility by the loss of their estates, Charles Stuart and Louis Capet by the loss of their heads. Do, one might say to those who will soon direct the house of commons, do unto the poorer class as you, being in their place, would have them, in your place, do unto you. Honestly,

steadily, boldly, abjuring deceit, hesitation and fear, follow up this generous principle of legislation ; and the poorer order will wait for universal suffrage, though miserable for a time, still with patience.

Supposing the reformed house of commons compelled to adopt this effectual method of postponing universal suffrage, yet they might be troubled in their course by a class of men, whose object seems to be mischief for mischief's sake. Troubled indeed, but not more than troubled, not checked, still less stopped. Even the mere annoyance would not last six months. By passing a few bills, such as a parliament elected by universal suffrage, content and instruction, would surely pass, the reformed parliament would destroy that power to teaze, to create trouble and mischief, which the feebleness and pride of a cabinet of lords has bestowed upon two classes, the ignorant demagogues and wild conservatives : harmless grumblers and broken jobbers, they would be called ; if, indeed, they were not utterly forgotten, after one year of genuine Christian legislation by the reformed house of commons.

The question that remains, is by far more difficult. May arrangements be made to qualify the bulk of the English people for chusing representatives in parliament ?

Volumes have been written to prove, that arrangements for that purpose could not have

any permanent effect ; and tons of books and pamphlets, reckoning but one copy of each, to suggest various measures for the cure of poverty and ignorance. Hitherto, those who contend that the greatest part of mankind is doomed by nature to misery and degradation, have had the best of the argument. It is not necessary on this occasion to interfere between these two parties. The question on which they dispute, must be settled one day or other. Leaving it to be discussed in an English parliament chosen by the whole people, the present object is to ascertain by what means the English poorer order may be qualified to take part in that discussion. The present question, therefore, though more difficult than that which has been just examined, is a small practical question, when compared with that great abstract question which divides the Malthusians and their opponents : it relates only to one generation. Truly, if a way should be found to bestow comfort and knowledge upon one generation of the poorer class, that might be a step to the permanent cure of misery and vice ; but sufficient for the day is the evil thereof : the present difficulty is great enough, though trifling, it may be, when compared with the other. Let us then limit the question.

May arrangements be made to bestow comfort and knowledge on *one generation* of the English poorer class ?

Yes, without doubt, says a believer in the omnipotence of education; increase the number of schools for the poor, and of mechanics' institutions; send teachers into the rural districts; take off the taxes on knowledge; proceed—

Stop friend; all this is supposed to have been done with a view to the postponement of universal suffrage.

He continues: Then you suppose the poor taught, that their own comfort depends on themselves, that their well-being is in their own hands, that, by prudently keeping their numbers under the demand for their services, they may exact high wages,—

Stop again: All this is good, may be necessary, for the permanent well-being of the labouring class; but the greatest imaginable prudence, though made universal to-morrow, would have no effect on wages for twenty years to come. Would you prudently get rid of children already born? If not, you propose to teach prudence, the highest wisdom, to a miserable race, without leisure, over-worked, anxious and discontented; to make the cart drag the horse; to produce a cause by means of its own effect. Prudence, wisdom, is the end; the means, high wages, leisure, peace of mind and instruction. A world of trouble has been wasted in the endeavour to instruct the wretched. You must begin at the beginning. Bestow ease on the working class,

and then, indeed, you may teach them to dread the return of misery. The first step is to raise wages. “ When we deliberate about the means of introducing intellectual and moral excellence into the minds of the principal portion of the people, one of the first things which we are bound to provide for, is a generous and animating diet. The physical causes must go along with the moral ; and nature herself forbids, that you should make a wise and virtuous people out of a starving one. Men must be happy themselves, before they can rejoice in the happiness of others ; they must have a certain vigour of mind before they can, in the midst of habitual suffering, resist a presented pleasure : their own lives and means of well-being must be worth something, before they can value, so as to respect, the life or well-being of any other person. This or that individual may be an extraordinary individual, and exhibit mental excellence in the midst of wretchedness ; but a wretched and excellent people never yet has been seen on the face of the earth. Though far from fond of paradoxical expressions, we are tempted to say that a good diet is a necessary part of good education ; for in one very important sense, it is emphatically true. In the great body of the people, all education is impotent without it.” *

* Art. Education, Supplement to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, by James Mill, Esq.

The first step is to raise wages. But how shall wages be raised, except either by increasing the amount of employment or by diminishing the number of labourers? In no other way, beyond a doubt; not by strikes at Manchester, nor by *Swing* fires in Kent; not by spade husbandry, nor by paper money; not by giving books to hungry paupers, half-starved weavers and parish apprentices, nor by accumulating more capital, and wasting it on foreign loans and far off ruinous speculations; but by increasing the proportion which employment bears to labour. How to raise immediately the proportion which employment bears to labour, and to maintain the higher proportion for twenty years or so; this is the question on which, if I have taken a just view of the political prospects of the English, depends their existence as a wealthy and civilized nation.

Here I must refer to the note, in which I have sought to explain the coincidence in England of overflowing wealth with extensive uneasiness and wide-spread misery. In order to raise wages immediately, the field for the employment of English capital and labour must be enlarged; whereby profits, and the rewards of many services not called labour, would be raised at the same time as the wages of labour. The whole world is before you. Open new channels for the most productive employment of English capital. Let the English buy bread from every people

that has bread to sell cheap. Make England, for all that is produced by steam, the workshop of the world. If, after this, there be capital and people to spare, imitate the ancient Greeks ; take a lesson from the Americans, who, as their capital and population increase, find room for both by means of colonization. You have abundance, superabundance, of capital : provide profitable employment for it, and you will improve the condition of all classes at once. Instead of lending your surplus capital to foreign states, or wasting it in South American mines, whereby no additional employment is given to English labour, rather, like the Americans, invest it in colonization ; so that, as it flies off, it may take with it, and employ, a corresponding amount of surplus labour, if there be any. How this might be done, and how capital so invested, might be recovered at pleasure, is stated elsewhere, but cannot be thoroughly understood by Englishmen till they shall learn the causes of certain peculiarities in the social condition of America. These, also, I have endeavoured to explain in some of the following notes. May the explanation assist to point out a way, by which the English shall escape from that corrupting and irritating state of political economy, which seems fit to precede the dissolution of empires !

NOTE VI.

FREE TRADE IN CORN, AS A MEANS OF ENLARGING,
THE FIELD OF EMPLOYMENT FOR ENGLISH
CAPITAL AND LABOUR.

Subject of this note stated—wide difference between facts in America and the English theory of rent—American theory of rent—various kinds and degrees of competition for the use of land—facts—effects of a free corn trade on the several kinds of competition for the use of land—with cheap bread, the rental of England must be greater—gradual repeal of the corn laws hurtful, for a time, to landlords and farmers; and not useful to any class of labourers—sudden repeal of the corn laws beneficial to all classes.

WITH respect to the foreign corn trade of England, there is but one point left for examination. The risk of depending on foreigners for the staff of life, the wisdom of protecting domestic agriculture, the folly of importing corn from abroad when you can reap it on your own native soil, the injustice of allowing foreign farmers, who are lightly taxed, to compete in your own market with your own farmers, who are heavily taxed; all these fallacies having been thoroughly exposed

by English writers; and the mischievous influence of the corn laws in limiting the English field of production being felt, if not understood, by the new ruling order, no one doubts that the reformed parliament, as soon as it shall truly represent the new class of voters, will establish a free trade in corn. But an important question remains; whether the corn laws ought to be repealed suddenly or by degrees. Now the object of what follows is to show, and principally, by correcting an error into which English political economists have been led by their ignorance of America, that the repeal of the corn laws, if gradual, would, for a time, be injurious to farmers and landlords, without being very useful to any class of labourers; but if sudden, would be beneficial to all those classes, and to the landlords in particular.

That whatever is good for a portion of society must be good for all, is a general principle or rule; and no one denies that the repeal of the English corn laws would be good for some classes of Englishmen. On general grounds, therefore, it would follow, that a free trade in corn must be beneficial to all Englishmen. The fact may be at variance with this *prima facie* conclusion; but if so, it forms an exception to the general rule; and those who maintain the exception are bound to prove that it exists. Yet what has been the course pursued by the friends and enemies of the

English corn laws? Both parties have taken for granted, and have built all their arguments on the bare assumption, that, in proportion as a free trade in corn must be beneficial to owners of capital and labour, it would be injurious to owners of land. As in stating that high wages must necessarily cause low profits, that the prosperity of the master depends on the misery of the workman, so, in this case, the English economists have taken pains to set different classes by the ears. The fifteenth edition of the celebrated *Catechism on the Corn Laws*, which contains all the common arguments for and against free trade in corn, begins thus: "For whose benefit are the corn laws? — *Manifestly*, of those who support them, the landlords." Those laws are, no doubt, intended for the benefit of the landlords; but so close a reasoner as Colonel Thompson, will admit, that between the intention and the fact there may be a wide difference. He concludes his very able work, as he begins it, by asserting that "the landlords are kept at the public expense." It may be so; but where is the proof? Take it for granted, most of the economists and landlords would answer. I venture to say, no: on the contrary I notice the bare assertion, which you would substitute for proof, in order to show that an argument, having for object to establish that a free trade in corn would be good for the owners of

land as well as for the owners of capital and labour, is not, upon the face of it, irrational.

The way in which, it is said, free trade in corn would injure the landlords, is by a diminution of their rents. The first step, therefore, in the enquiry, is to ascertain the nature of rent.

* This point is already settled by the English economists. When, say they, the increase of capital and population leads to the cultivation of inferior land, people are willing to pay for the use of superior land. This payment, which is always equal to the difference between the greater and less natural productiveness of more and less fertile soils, constitutes rent. Other things, they add, enter into rent, vulgarly speaking, such as the interest which the tenant pays for the use of the landlord's capital fixed in buildings and improvements; but, speaking philosophically, rent is a payment for leave to use land of superior natural fertility, and nothing else is rent.

According to this statement, we should have to deduct from the rental of England :—

1. The interest of hundreds of millions of capital, fixed on the land and the property of those who own the land :—

2. All that is paid for the superior position of some land ; that is, the greater vicinity to manure and a market.

3. All that is paid, over the payment for supe-

perior natural fertility, for accommodation land in the neighbourhood of towns and villages.

4. All that is paid for land used for purposes of pleasure and amusement, such as gardens and pleasure grounds, the tenants of which look, not to profit, but to gratification.

5. All that is paid for the use of land as building ground.

But it may be, that all these payments under the name of rent, amount to a great deal more than what is paid for the superior natural fertility of land. If so, rent, philosophically speaking, is but a small fraction of rent in the vulgar tongue.

The philosophical theory of rent is made to rest, by all the English economists, on a statement directly at variance with the truth; namely, that little or no rent is ever paid in countries where the most fertile land may be obtained for a trifle in unlimited quantities. Before contradicting this statement, it will be well to show, by two examples out of hundreds, how emphatically it is made.

“So long,” says Mr. Mill, “as a part only of the best land is required for cultivation, all that is uncultivated yields nothing; that is, nothing which has any value. It naturally therefore, remains unappropriated, and any man may have it who undertakes to render it produc-

tive. During this time land, speaking correctly, yields no rent.”*

“On the first settlement” says Mr. M’Culloch, “of any country abounding in large tracts of unappropriated land, *no rent is ever paid*; and for this obvious reason, that no person will pay rent for what may be obtained in unlimited quantities for nothing. Thus in New Holland, where there is an ample supply of fertile and unappropriated land, *rent will not be heard of until the best lands are cultivated*”† Again, “in *New Holland, Indiana, and Illinois*, and generally in all situations in which no rent is paid, and the best of the good lands only are cultivated.”

Statements to the like effect might be quoted from every treatise on rent that has been published in England.

Now the fact is, that in the town of Sydney in New Holland, the rent of land is nearly as high as in London; that a very high rent is paid for land in Hobarts Town, Van Dieman’s Land, in Montreal, in the new town of York, Upper Canada, and in every town of the United States, not excepting those which have been created within these two years; that in the immediate neigh-

* Elements of Political Economy. *Sec. Rent*, p. 31, 3d edit.

† Professor M’Culloch’s Principles of Political Economy, chap. *Rent*, p 433, 2d edit.

bourhood of all such towns a considerable rent is paid for garden ground and accommodation land ; and that in all new settlements, whether American or Australian, *where there are but few roads*, the competition for land in the neighbourhood of a market, or of a road which leads to a market, is so great, that all such land, unless it be utterly sterile, is reckoned more valuable than the most fertile land far from a market, and either yields rent accordingly, or enables its owner to take a greater produce to market, which comes to the same thing. The most ample proof of this assertion will be found in every published account of New South Wales and Upper Canada, in the published histories of most of the United States, and in every book of travels in America which notices the value of land. There have been published, in London and Edinburgh, certainly, not less than three hundred volumes, each of which contains evidence of the greatly superior value of some land in countries, where the most fertile land may be obtained in unlimited quantities for next to nothing ; and showing too, that in all such cases the value of land depends, hardly at all on superior natural fertility, but almost entirely on greater vicinity to labour for raising produce and to a market for disposing of it. There are so many witnesses to this fact, whose evidence is so much alike, that I should take from the force of their united testimony by quoting a

part of it.* All good private libraries in England abound in such evidence, as Mr. Mill and Mr. M'Culloch would acknowledge after one hour's search in books relating to "new countries." If nature had provided markets in waste countries, or if mankind could fly, easily carrying great weights through the air, then, indeed, the value of land used in producing food for market, would depend on superior natural fertility, and where unlimited quantities of the most fertile land might be obtained for nothing, without flying too far, no rent would be paid for the use of land in producing food for market. Even in that case, however, rent would be paid for the use of land in various other ways, as for gardens and buildings. As it is, land speculators in Australia, Canada and America, calculate that, because, in new settlements, the difference between different portions of land in respect to advantages of position must necessarily be very great, therefore, in a new settlement, the difference of value between different portions of land must necessarily be very great. Thus it frequently happens, that when one of the western states of America, or some land-jobbing company, fixes on a spot in the wilderness as fit for a town, marks out the

* For another purpose, there is collected in the Appendix, No. 2, a number of facts, which establish that rent, and a high rent too, is paid in new countries, where unlimited quantities of fertile land may be obtained for a trifle.

future streets by notches on the trees, and fixes a day for selling the district in lots by auction, hundreds of people congregate, build houses *upon wheels* and make ready for the sale by estimating the future different values of the different lots. Captain Basil Hall describes admirably one case of this sort, in which twelve hundred people had assembled in the forest and built seventy moveable houses, weeks before the day of sale. The different lots of land sold at such auctions are, generally, of pretty equal natural fertility, being equally covered by dense forest of the same kind of trees; yet, while still covered by the forest, they sell for very different prices. And this is the case, not only with respect to town lots, but also as to lots which it is foreseen will be, though not in the future town, more or less distant from the future market. In fact, the greatest trade in America, that of land-jobbing, by which more fortunes have been made than by any other: a trade in which three out of four Americans engage at some period of their lives, either singly or in companies; this trade, by which even a London company has lately made immense profits in Canada, which last year produced to the American government, the greatest of land-jobbers, nearly 700,000*l.*; this trade of land-jobbing, of which it would seem that the English economists have never heard, depends principally upon the superior value which, in countries where unlimited quantities of the most

fertile land may be obtained for a trifle, land derives from superior position. The English theory of rent, therefore, whether correct or not is made to rest upon a great mistatement of fact.

Now the American theory of rent is this. Rent consists of a yearly payment for the use of land. But much land, which might be turned to all the purposes of man, yields no rent. Land, for instance, on the south coast of New Holland,* or far west of the Mississippi, which is still uninhabited, yields no rent; and never will yield a rent until there shall be people desirous to use it. Indeed, no one would pay for the use of land, which no other person was desirous to use. Rent, therefore, arises from competition for the use of land.

Competition for the use of land is of various kinds and of various degrees.

First, touching the kinds of competition; these are various, because land is used for various purposes. In England land is used for growing corn, for breeding and fattening cattle, for producing milk, kitchen vegetables and fruit, for the

* Though, as in the case of the sale described by Captain Hall, a London company lately offered to the British government 125,000*l.* for 500,000 acres of land on this desert coast. The offer was made, with a view to profit by the sale, at very enhanced prices, of land in the neighbourhood of a future market: why the offer was refused, may be seen in the Appendix, No. 3.

growth of timber and other raw materials of several manufactures, for the sites of warehouses, factories, houses in towns, villas and mansions, for pleasure grounds, parks and game-preserves, besides an infinity of other purposes.

The degrees of competition vary with the various kinds of competition. The highest degree of competition occurs near the exchanges of such towns as London, Liverpool and New York. In those spots land is measured, not by the acre, but by the yard and foot; and yields, or is worth, a rent which may be called enormous, compared with the highest rent ever paid for the use of land in producing food. No competition whatever occurs in such spots as Dartmoor, for example, or the tops of mountains in Wales, where soil and climate are equally unfit for residence, for producing food and for every other human purpose.

Such spots yield no rent; and any one might appropriate them, if the actual proprietors were not induced to maintain their titles by a vague hope of mineral discoveries, or for the vain pleasure of calling their own, though without the least advantage, so much more of the earth's surface. The lowest degree of competition occurs on these spots, which are so distant from towns and roads as to be unfit for any other purpose than the production of food, and of which the produce, owing to a bad soil or climate, or both, as well as to distance from markets and manure, is little more

than sufficient to cover the expence of cultivation. This lowest degree of competition may produce a rent of some pence per acre ; while the highest degree of competition yields a rent of some thousand pounds per acre. Between these two extremes, various amounts of rent are produced by various degrees of competition.

This view of the subject will be made more clear by reference to some facts.

1. Part of Dengy Hundred in Essex consists of land reclaimed from the sea, and uniformly of the greatest natural fertility ; not merely producing large crops, but, since the soil is light as well as rich, producing them with a small outlay of capital. Farther, between this land and the metropolis there is easy water communication ; so that manure is easily obtained and the produce is easily conveyed to the best market. Yet, for this land, the average rent paid, deducting tythes, is not more than twenty-five shillings per acre ; while for land not more fertile, in some parts of Warwickshire, used only for producing food, and not nearer than the Essex farms to manure and a market, a rent of from two to three pounds per acre is obtained. That the produce of the Essex land is greater even than that of the land in Warwickshire, is shown by the higher amount paid for composition of tythes in the former case. But how are we to explain the difference of rent ? Of mere theorists the most profound would be at a

loss to account for the lower value of the land in Essex: it is explained by the unhealthiness of the Essex marshes, which indisposes farmers to settle there; so that when the lease of a farm expires, either no one bids against the old tenant, or no one bids more than the old rent. Many considerable fortunes, accordingly, have been made by farmers in that part of Essex, who retained as profit much of what they or others would have paid for rent, if the competition for farms had been as great in the thinly-peopled Essex marshes as it is in the healthy and populous county of Warwick. This circumstance, though not bearing on any of the kinds of competition mentioned above, is remarkably illustrative of the doctrine, that different kinds and degrees of competition arise from various causes.

2. All the land for some miles south, east and west of Dunkirk (Downchurch) in France, consists naturally of downs of loose sand, blown up from a gaining sea-shore on to a deep subsoil of sand, without water, and as sterile as the most naked rock. Yet in this district the rent of land is considerably higher than in the very fertile district which, on the opposite coast of England, divides the Isle of Thanet from the rest of Kent. Why? If rent be paid because, as Mr. Mill says, in the beginning of his chapter on rent, "land is of different degrees of fertility," we should go on to say, because the English land is naturally

sterile, while the French land is naturally rich. The fact, however, is this ; at least this is the way, in which the people about Dunkirk account for the high rents yielded by their naturally sterile land. Time was when the district was uninhabited, and then, of course, no rent was paid. But a church having been built on the barren downs, and its patron saint, Eloi, being in great repute, pilgrims flocked thither from all parts of France and the Low Countries. By this means a town was established. In time the inhabitants of the town constructed a port ; roads were next made from the port across the downs to the populous highlands which had once formed the sea shore, and afterwards canals in various directions ; the flatness and softness of the sandy district offering great facilities for canal-cutting. In the end, the means of communication became more abundant in this district than in any other part of France, as they are still : and the result was, that the population of the district became very great, towns and villages being built at a short distance from each other ; that by means of canals, clay and other manures were easily obtained, and being applied to the sand rendered it more productive than the ancient highlands of chalk ; whilst those canals, again, afforded great facilities for taking produce to market. In this way, the cost of production in the market becoming less and less by means of art, the naturally sterile downs about

Dunkirk, which have never been used except for producing food, became more valuable, subject to a higher degree of competition, than the rich marsh lands between Sandwich and Reculver, on which the population is scanty and of which every acre, in comparison with any part of the French Low Countries, is distant from market.

3. The garden grounds on the banks of the Thames, not far from London, are worth four or five, and in some cases ten, times as much as alluvial land of equal natural fertility, which is either more distant from manure and a market, or which, though nearer to manure and a market, is not required to supply a demand for produce of a perishable nature. Thousands of like cases might be cited.

4. Of late years, in England, many cases have occurred, in which the construction of a bridge between a town and mere farm land on the other side of the river, having enabled the inhabitants of the town to use such farm land for gardens, for the keep of cows, for turning out horses, and other purposes of utility or pleasure, has caused the rent of such land to rise, with a corresponding fall in the rent of accommodation land on the town side of the river. In these cases a bridge, which has nothing to do with natural fertility, causes a higher rent in one place, and a lower rent in another, by means of higher and lower degree of competition for the use of land.

5. Every one at all acquainted with rural affairs in England or Scotland must know of cases, in which the making of a canal or a road has raised the rent of land throughout the borders of the new line of communication. In such cases, what the tenant saves by a decrease in the cost of manure, and of taking produce to market, falls to the landlord in the shape of rent: in such cases, a higher rent may be paid with the same profit as before, and is paid because a higher degree of competition has taken place.

6. But how much more striking is the increase of rent on and around some parts of the borders of new lines of communication, which are chosen for the sites of towns or villages. In these cases ground rents, garden rents and accommodation rents, are now paid for land which before yielded rent for only the second degree, perhaps, of natural fertility; such higher rents being paid because some of the highest degrees of competition have been created where only the lowest degree existed before. The land around every English town, which has much increased during the last thirty years, furnishes to numbers an example of this kind with which they must be familiar; a case in which, through the increase of wealth and population, land which formerly yielded only garden and accommodation rent now yields building rent; land, which formerly yielded only a farming rent, now yields garden

and accommodation rent; and land, still used for farming, is more productive with the same cost, or as productive with less cost, and is therefore worth a higher rent, in consequence of more manure and a greater demand for farm produce in the neighbourhood of such mere farming land.

7. On that part of the coast of the Mediterranean formerly subject to the Genoese republic, very little corn and no meat was ever produced: on the other side of the Appennines, in Piedmont, there are districts which produce scarce any thing but corn and cattle; and part of the produce of those districts is consumed in the Genoese territory. Yet the rent of land, on the mountainous coast of the Gulph of Genoa, was a few years back, and probably still is, considerably higher than in those very fertile districts of Piedmont, from which the Genoese derive a part of their food. This difference of rent is easily explained. In Piedmont, there was no competition for the use of land, except in producing corn and meat. The soil of Genoa being unsuited to the production of corn and meat, the Genoese turned their industry into the channels of manufactures and commerce, whereby they were enabled to obtain corn and meat from foreign soils. Obtaining corn and meat with an outlay of capital, much less than would have been required to raise the same produce on their own territory, they created, by the increase of wealth and popu-

lation, a demand for productions, which were easily raised on their own soil, such as garden vegetables, fruit, olive oil, silk and wine. Thus land, which if it had been used for growing corn or feeding cattle, would, at best, have returned a produce not more than sufficient to replace capital with profit, and for which, therefore, no rent could have been paid, now yielded a rent equal to the difference between the value of the produce and the cost of production. In this case, land which was sterile for one purpose, became fertile for another. Then, as by means of importing corn and meat, the wealth and population of the state increased, roads were carried into narrow vallies which before had been shut against competition, and thus the land of those vallies, which before had been worth nothing, came to be valuable, and to yield rent accordingly. Lastly, with the further increase of wealth and population, owing entirely to the continued cheapness of corn and meat, there occurred an extensive demand for the use of land in many ways besides cultivation. The inhabitants of Genoa the Magnificent, (magnificent, because without corn laws) required, besides houses, warehouses and other buildings within the city walls, country villas, pleasure gardens and ornamented grounds. For these, the staff of life being cheap, they could well afford to pay without regard to profit. Thus much land acquired a value far

exceeding the difference between the value and the cost of things raised for sale. What had occurred near the city of Genoa, took place, more or less, at other places on the coast, where there arose such towns as Spezia, Noli, Voltri and Savona, and where some land, sterile for producing corn or meat, came to yield a rent for the use of it in producing other things; while some land, neither more nor less fertile for any purpose of cultivation, yielded a rent much higher than was ever paid for the most fertile land used in producing commodities for market. The original cause of all, or nearly all, the rent paid in the Genoese territory, was the importation of corn and meat, which produced all the higher degrees of competition for the use of land on spots where, unless the staff of life had been imported from foreign soils, the lowest degree of competition could hardly have existed. How the Genoese would stare, if Mr. Mill, explaining to them the cause of high rent in their sterile country, were to begin with the first sentence of his chapter on rent: "land is of different degrees of fertility"!

From considering the above facts, it appears that rent is produced by an infinite variety of causes: each cause, however, operating by way of competition for the use of land; and that some kinds of competition are far more powerful, produce a much higher rent, than others. Let us now see what, in England, are the main

circumstances that regulate the degrees of competition for the use of land.

First. Superior natural fertility.

Secondly. Superior productiveness arising from improvements, such as draining, fencing, building, &c.

Thirdly. Superior vicinity to manure, which is the same as superior natural fertility.

Fourthly. Superior vicinity to markets, which reduces, by so much, the cost of taking produce to market.

Fifthly. A demand for milk, fruit and kitchen vegetables, which will not bear long carriage.

Sixthly. A demand for pleasure gardens, pleasure grounds and ground for all the purposes of building.

Superior natural fertility, alone, produces some competition : add improvements, which are equal to greater natural fertility, but which must be called fixed capital, and a higher degree of competition takes place : superadd vicinity to manure and to markets, when a still higher degree of competition occurs, with a still higher rent : produce a demand for accommodation land, when competition takes place in the highest degree but one : produce a demand for pleasure gardens, pleasure grounds and building ground, when the result is the highest degree of competition and the highest rent. How, in England, a free trade in corn would affect these several

degrees of competition for the use of land, and the aggregate rental of the country, is the practical question before us.

Let us suppose that if the English were free to buy corn in the cheapest markets they could anywhere find, there would no longer be any demand at all for English corn; wheat, barley and oats. In this case, competition for the use of land in growing corn would cease altogether.

If this competition should cease altogether, bread not becoming any cheaper, the general competition for the use of land in producing food would be greatly reduced. But, since the object of free trade in corn is to obtain cheap bread, we have a right to presume that, the corn laws repealed, bread would become much cheaper. Let us suppose, taking the extreme case supposed by the landlords, when they say that a free trade in corn would be ruinous to them, that bread should be obtained at half its present price. In that case, the demand for all other kinds of food would increase with the cheapness of bread. But, even if the demand for other kinds of food were doubled, it does not follow, as a matter of course, that the new demand for the produce of land would have the same effect on competition as the demand which had ceased. Whether or not this would be the case, depends upon two proportions; first, the actual proportion between corn land and land used for growing other kinds of

food ; secondly, the proportion which the demand for food not corn would bear to the present demand for food not corn, if the price of bread were reduced by half. These are points which might perhaps be ascertained by a diligent government. Supposing that the new demand for food not corn, would be equal in effect to the present demand for corn and for food not corn, in that case the corn laws might be repealed without even a momentary decrease of demand for the use of land in producing food ; and, at all events, after a while, the increase of people and wealth, owing to the cheapness of the staff of life, would raise the demand for food not corn, up to the present demand for all kinds of food.

How would this, either presently, or before long, affect the various degrees of competition ?

1. Superior natural fertility would be as valuable as ever. Might it not become more valuable ? or rather, might not much land, which has now but the fourth or third degree of fertility for the growth of corn, become of the second or first degree for the growth of other kinds of food ? As the Genoese soil is not fit for the growth of corn or meat, but is fit for the growth of wine, silk and oil, so the soil, or rather climate, of England, is more fit for the growth of food not corn, than for the growth of corn. Thus cheapness of bread extending to some land, which is inferior for its present purpose, a superior quality for new

purposes, would rather augment than decrease the effect of the lowest degree of competition. Towards the increase of this effect, also, the growth of raw materials for manufactures, such as timber and wool, instead of the growth of corn, a change which could not but ensue in many cases, if the English were to buy their corn with manufactures, would operate very considerably.

2. Capital fixed upon land, as well as, we may add here, the unfixed capital of the farmers, would be as valuable as ever. Fifty years ago, this would not have been the case; because at that time the art of producing animal food by tillage had made little progress in England; but at this time, every English farmer knows how to raise meat with the plough. If a demand for animal food, milk, butter, cheese and meat, should take the place of a demand for home-grown corn, some farmers, no doubt, would convert a portion of their corn land into meadow; but, considering the great skill of the English in growing artificial food for cattle, and how the power of growing such food would be increased by the greater number of cattle kept, that is, the greater quantity of manure, a large proportion of the present corn lands would, it seems inevitable, be used for the growth of turnips, potatoes, beetroot, clover, tares, lucern, and such like food for cattle, which can be raised only by the same sort of

capital as is used in raising corn, and which, on the score of climate, would be raised with less expense than corn.

These two are the only kinds of competition for the use of land that would be affected by cheapness of bread, so long as wealth and population had not increased. But inevitably, if bread were cheap, wealth and population would very rapidly increase. Whatever the effect of cheapness of bread on these two kinds of competition without an increase of wealth or population, it would manifestly be much greater after such increase.

But now we have to consider the influence of a great increase of wealth and population on the four higher degrees of competition.

Let us suppose the population and wealth of the country to be doubled; a supposition by no means extravagant, after supposing that the staff of life had been very cheap during one generation. In this case, the extent of roads, though not doubled, would be greatly increased. On many of the new lines of road, as well as on those which exist already, market towns would be built in spots, where, at present, neither manure can be obtained nor produce sold. In the next place, a large proportion of the people called into existence by cheapness of bread, would reside in towns; so that, with double the actual population, the town population would be much more

than doubled. In this way, land, which is now of second or third rate quality in respect to position, to manure and a market, would become first rate and second rate. Thus, also, the extent of land required for producing perishable food, such as milk, fruit and kitchen vegetables, would be more than twice as much as it is now. And, finally, the demand for pleasure gardens, pleasure grounds and for building ground, would be more than doubled with the supposed increase of wealth and population. Whatever the increase of wealth and population year by year, all the higher degrees of competition for land would be much more rapidly extended.

Thus, while a free trade in corn might extend to some land, which is of inferior quality for the growth of corn, a superior quality for the growth of other things, not lessening the value of any capital fixed upon land, but rather increasing the power of such capital by spreading a mode of cultivation more suited to the soil and climate of England ; while competition for superior natural fertility, and the use of fixed capital, might be rather increased than diminished, the influence of all the higher degrees of competition would, it seems quite plain, be extended incalculably. The aggregate rental of the country must necessarily increase to the same extent. All land-owners, indeed, would not derive equal benefit, in proportion to their present rentals, from such

an extension of the higher degrees of competition. The greatest increase of wealth and population would not cause any increase of competition for land in the neighbourhood of the London exchange, where already the very highest degree of competition exists and the very highest rent is obtained ; nor, probably, would the value of any land now used as building ground be much increased by the greatest increase of wealth and population. The effect of greater wealth and population would be to extend to land, now subject to one of the lower degrees, a higher degree of competition ; but already so large a portion of the surface of England is applicable to those purposes which create the higher degrees of competition, that but few landlords could miss reaping some share of the great increase of aggregate rental which, if this view of the subject be correct, must result from a free trade in corn. If so, bread cannot, one should think, be made too cheap, nor be made cheap too soon, for the landlords.

But here a consideration arises, which is of great importance to the landlords. Two ways of making bread cheap are proposed ; that of suddenly repealing all the laws which restrict the importation of corn ; secondly, that of substituting for the present truly whimsical laws a fixed duty on imported corn, and providing that the duty shall decrease year by year until it cease

altogether. The ground of this latter suggestion is tenderness for the landlords, farmers and farm labourers. Give them time, say some of the advocates of cheap bread ; give the agriculturists time, so that the transition from corn growing to other kinds of production being gradual, not even a passing injury may be suffered by any of them. Now this gradual method of proceeding appears to me to be the only way in which the agriculturists may be injured by a repeal of the corn laws ; and the only way, too, in which the other classes could fail, for a time at least, to reap much advantage from cheapness of bread.

First, as to the landlords. Let us suppose that twenty years were allowed for the reduction of bread to half its present price, and that a twentieth part of the whole reduction should take place in each of the twenty years. In that case, each year would bring a fall in the price of bread equal to one fortieth of the present price. With so slow a decrease in the price of bread, little or no improvement could take place in the condition of the bulk of the people, because the number of labourers would increase as fast as bread became cheaper ; and thus though every year there would be more labourers to eat bread, nay even though all the labouring class should eat more bread, the class of labourers generally, who form the bulk of the people, would not be able to purchase more animal food. The price of

bread being reduced by so slow a process as to give time for a corresponding increase of people, money wages would fall with the price of bread, and the quality of labourers' food would not be raised. In this case, the increase of demand for animal food would not be more rapid than the increase of population generally. But if, on the contrary, bread were suddenly reduced to half its present price, then, as the labouring population could not increase suddenly, the bulk of the people must be able to purchase a great deal more than twice as much animal food as they purchase now. At present, they buy very little animal food. By giving to the bulk of the people the power to buy animal food, the present demand for animal food might be immediately doubled, trebled, or even quadrupled; and thus the transition from corn growing to the production of other kinds of food might not have to wait upon the increase of population. If the slow process were adopted, a considerable decrease of the demand for home grown corn might take place, before population had increased enough to increase the demand for animal food: whereas, if the sudden process of repeal were adopted, the power of the whole labouring class to buy animal food being thus suddenly and greatly increased, then the increase of demand for animal food would more or less correspond with the decrease of demand for home grown corn. In this way, the

transition from one kind to another kind of production might take place without even passing loss to the owners of land. If, then, bread is to be made cheap, the cheaper the better and the sooner the better for the landlords.

Secondly, as to the farmers. These, like the landlords, might suffer from a slow process of repeal, which should cause a decrease in the demand for home-grown corn, without a corresponding increase of demand for other things which English farmers could raise. In fact, what has just been said of the landlords ought rather to have been said of the farmers, since the landlord could suffer only through the farmer's loss. Supposing transition from corn growing to other kinds of production inevitable, the thing which the farmers have to fear is temporary stagnation. The best way to produce a temporary stagnation of farming business seems to be, by enabling the bulk of the people to buy foreign corn without enabling them to buy English milk, butter, cheese and meat : the only way to prevent such stagnation, by suddenly making bread very cheap, so that the demand for farm produce not corn should at once equal, if it did not exceed, the present demand for corn and other things together.

In two points of view more, the farmers appear to be interested in a sudden repeal of the corn laws ; first as capitalists and secondly as holders of leases. "A farmer," says the author of cheap

corn best for farmers,* “is as much a capitalist as a shopkeeper or a manufacturer; and the profits of farming capital must be lowered by any cause which lowers the profits of other capital. A farmer’s gain cannot be permanently greater than that of other capitalists. He has, in common with other capitalists, a very strong interest in high profits.” Of course he has; and is not one object of free trade in corn to raise the profits of capital generally, by enlarging the English field of production? If, by the purchase of bread from other countries, the field of production should be so much enlarged as to raise the common rate of profit, farmers’ profits could not but rise; and the sooner, of course, this change should take place the better for the farmer, as for the manufacturer and shopkeeper. Secondly, supposing the aggregate value of land to be raised, partly in consequence of land which was inferior for one purpose becoming superior for other purposes, and still more by the extension of all the higher degrees of competition, many leases, which now are only contracts, might become bonds for the landlord, and, for the tenant, securities worth a premium. Supposing the demand for other things

* Mr. Henry Drummond, who founded the professorship of Political Economy at Oxford, and who, in this pamphlet, recognizes the doctrine, that profits depend on the proportion between capital and the field of production.

than corn to become suddenly greater than the demand for corn and other things, and supposing, further, a rapid increase of wealth and population, one can imagine landlords envious of their tenants under lease.

Thirdly, what would be the influence of cheapness of bread, obtained slowly or suddenly, on the condition of agricultural labourers? "Oh! take pity on the poor labourers," say some landlords; "if you put an end to the growth of corn in England, you will diminish employment for that unfortunate class, and so lower their wages." This profession of tenderness for the pauper herd means: Beware of increasing the poor's-rate, which falls on us landlords. And though a good part of the poor's-rate, levied in the corn districts of England, be not borne by the landlords, all that part, namely, with which the farmers pay wages, and which must have been paid without poor-laws, still, since paupers maintained in idleness are kept by the landlords, it is true that, as agricultural labourers were thrown out of employment, the landlords would have to keep more people. But it does not follow, that the poor's-rate would increase because the number of persons to be maintained in idleness was greater. The rate payers would have the benefit of cheap bread, like all other classes; except the paupers, whose money allowance would be diminished as bread became cheaper. Thus, even supposing a

great decrease of agricultural employment, in consequence of a great decrease in the price of bread (and one could not take place without the other) it might be as broad for the landlords as it was long; not to reckon their greater means of paying the same amount, in consequence of the greater value conferred upon their land by extending to it higher degrees of competition. For three reasons, however, it appears probable, nay certain, that cheapness of bread, if it should come suddenly, would not throw any agricultural labourers out of employment; in which case, the difference between cheap bread and dear bread would be so much pure gain to the payers of poor's-rate. Because, first, as capital now used in corn growing could be easily used in producing other kinds of food, so could corn-growing labour be easily turned to the production of turnips, potatoes, beatroot, clover, tares, lucern, &c., and to the management of sheep, and cattle. Transition, then, is not so much to be feared as stagnation; and the way to prevent stagnation is to make the transition suddenly; a new and perhaps a greater demand for the produce of farm labour arising at the moment when the old demand should cease; not waiting for the increase of population. Because, secondly, if, which may be doubtful, the various modes of cultivation substituted for corn-growing should require fewer hands than are now employed in agriculture,

still, all the cheap corn brought to England must be purchased with English labour ; and this, as it could not increase suddenly, would bear a less proportion to employment, so soon as a free trade in corn had provided profitable investments for great masses of capital now lying idle or about to go abroad. If any one should say that agricultural labourers would not be fit for those occupations by which cheap corn was purchased, I would ask him, whether the wild Irish cottiers be fit for the great quantity of manufacturing work which they perform in England ? and would tell him further, that during the last war between America and England, American husbandmen found no difficulty in turning their hands to all sorts of manufacturing employments. Lastly, because the more productive use of the national capital, without reckoning any increase of it, would create a new demand for labour in a hundred kinds of work, for which peasants are already quite fit ; such as, merely for example, in building factories, warehouses, houses and mansions, in making wharfs, roads, canals, bridges, gardens and pleasure grounds, in cultivating kitchen vegetables and perishable fruit, in portorage and domestic service ; which new demand could not, for some time, be supplied by a corresponding increase of people.

All these reasons for concluding, that cheapness of bread would rather increase than diminish

employment for agricultural labourers, are so many reasons, likewise, why bread cannot become too cheap, nor become cheap too suddenly, for the good of that miserable class. It must be acknowledged, however, that a class, already so abject, would not be injured by that gradual repeal of the corn laws, which, lowering the demand for English corn without for some time raising the demand for other productions of English land, would injure the present race of farmers and landlords. In that case, some agricultural labourers, who now work for pauper's allowance, would receive pauper's allowance without working for it; and the difference would fall upon the landlords, after, in some cases, falling on tenants under lease. Cases might occur, in which the paupers would become the landlords by eating the whole rent, though without any change in their condition either for better or worse. Verily, the more one reflects on the subject, the more plain does it seem, that the lords of the soil are deeply interested in making bread very cheap as quickly as possible. But this, probably, they will never understand; for do not they set their faces against rail-roads; blind to the certainty of profit, and thoughtful only of their pheasants' tranquillity.

All the other classes, manufacturers, shipowners, merchants, dealers, professional men, clerks and workmen of every kind, whose comfort depends

on the rates of profit and wages, that is, on the proportion which these classes and their capital bear to the field of production; these classes, though they and their capital would increase slowly with a gradual fall in the price of bread, might not obtain higher profits and wages unless the price of bread should fall more rapidly than they and their capital should increase. If the field of production were enlarged by slow degrees, capital and labour might increase at the same rate; in which case there would be no change of proportion amongst the three elements of production. In that case, the wealth and population of England would increase, far more rapidly, perhaps, than since the war; there would be more capitalists and more labourers, more factories, warehouses, ships, roads and houses, more signs of wealth; but no improvement in the condition of either capitalists or labourers. Whereas, a sudden enlargement of the means for employing capital with profit, so great an enlargement suddenly that capital and labour should for some time bear a lower proportion to the field of production, must raise profits and wages both together. For the sake, then, of the industrious classes generally, bread cannot be made too cheap, nor be made cheap too soon.

Referring to the preceding note, all classes, and especially the new ruling order, have a deep political interest in making bread very cheap all

at once. It will be impossible to qualify the bulk of the people for taking a part in the government unless their wages be raised, unless they obtain some leisure and peace of mind. Their wages will not be raised, if they should increase in number as fast as bread becomes cheaper. As respects them, the object is to make the staff of life very cheap, without a fall, if possible with a rise, of money wages; and this can be accomplished, if at all, only by a great and sudden fall in the price of bread. For the sake of all classes and on every account, therefore, it appears that, rather than get rid of restrictions on the corn-trade by a slow process, which should begin to-morrow and end twenty years hence, the English would do far better, if they had sufficient patience, to leave the corn laws untouched for twenty years and then repeal them at one blow.

NOTE VII.

CLOSE RELATION BETWEEN THE FOREIGN CORN
TRADE OF ENGLAND AND THE FOREIGN TRADE
OF CHINA.

Object of the English in a free corn trade—very cheap corn not raised except by slaves—why so—direct trade between English manufacturers and the producers of cheap corn, must be very limited—indirect trade for procuring cheap corn, by means of direct trade with the Chinese empire.

THE foreign corn trade of England and the foreign trade of the Chinese empire appear, at first sight, to be subjects not closely related ; but a very brief enquiry will show the most intimate connection between them.

A free trade in corn would be of but little service to the English, if there were not plenty of people in the world ready to buy English manufactured goods with cheap corn. To every trade there must be two parties : he who sells must buy, and he who buys must sell. The English can produce very cheap cotton and woollen goods, and very cheap hardware ; but of what service would it be to them to produce more of these

cheap things, without a market in which they could be exchanged for cheap corn? It is very important, therefore, with reference to the foreign corn trade of England, to see who in the world are the producers of the cheapest corn.

Very cheap corn is not produced any where, in large quantities, except by the labour of slaves, black or white, called slaves or serfs. This is a fact so well known, that as a fact one need not dwell on it; but why is it that serfs in Poland and slaves in America produce cheaper corn than freemen anywhere?

More than one English economist would perhaps say, that the peculiar cheapness of slave-grown corn is owing to the cheapness of slave-labour; the wages of such labour consisting only of a bare subsistence for the labourer. But in what country, except North America and some new colonies, do the wages of free labour employed in agriculture, much exceed a bare subsistence for the labourer? Perhaps, speaking generally, it might be shown, that slaves have more to subsist on than free labourers employed in agriculture, as undoubtedly farm-horses in England, being a valuable property, are better fed than English peasants. But, it might be said, the subsistence of slaves, though more in quantity, is less in cost, by reason of the cheapness of the produce of their labour on which they live. To say this, however, would be to put the

effect for the cause. In the next place, considering the prime cost of slaves, a very important point, their stupidity, the cost of curing them when ill, and of maintaining them during sickness, their carelessness, and the great cost of keeping them in order, with the loss occasioned by the total escape of some of them and the cost of getting back some who escape; taking all these points into consideration, it will be seen that the labour of slaves is dearer than that of freemen, though the produce of their labour be cheaper. If labour were the only element of production, this contradiction could not occur; the labour being dear, the produce could not be cheap. But land also is an element of production. Wherever very cheap corn is produced, land is very cheap; and though in such cases the corn be raised by slaves, its cheapness seems attributable to the cheapness, not of the labour which raises it, but of the land on which it is raised. Still it will be asked, if this were the case, why should not very cheap corn be raised by free labourers on cheap land. Because, I answer, where land is very cheap and all men are free, where every one who so pleases can easily obtain a piece of land for himself, not only is labour very dear, as respects the labourers' share of the produce, but the difficulty is to obtain combined labour at any price. As the two greyhounds running together catch more hares than

four running separately, so the labour of slaves, though dear compared with that of free labourers in most countries, is, being combined, much more productive, in proportion to the number of hands employed, than the divided labour of free-men wherever land is very cheap. This explains why slavery and great cheapness of land have generally existed together; showing besides, that the cheapness of corn raised by slaves is owing, not to the cheapness of slave-labour, but to the cheapness of land; that same cheapness of land being also the cause of slavery. I have dwelt fully on this point in a note on the origin, progress and prospects, of slavery in America.

Now the master of slaves and serfs would not be apt to produce cheap corn for the English market, if they had no prospect of being paid for it except with English manufactured goods. A Polish or Russian noble, or a slave owner in Virginia, if he were to exchange the produce of his land directly with a Manchester manufacturer for the produce of steam engines, would hardly know what to do with his purchase. The English will be able to obtain a great deal of very cheap corn, only by an indirect trade; selling their manufactured goods where such things are in great request, for things which are in great request with the producers of cheap corn; just as the Genoese buy corn and meat in Piedmont with salt-fish and hard money, which they first

obtain by means of trade with North and South America. By what indirect, and perhaps very complicated traffic, cheap corn would come to England in consequence of cheap manufactured goods going from England, the English government need not enquire: that is a point which may safely be left to the traders, and any meddling with it by the government could not but be hurtful. But, whether there be in the world a sufficient demand for manufactured goods to enable the English to obtain cheap corn by some indirect trade, is a question of the greatest moment to the whole people. Further, if there be any foreign restriction on the foreign demand for English manufactured goods, restrictions which it is in the power of the English government to remove, interference for that purpose is a proper office, a bounden duty of government. The nation who, but for the existence of certain restrictions on trade, would probably buy the greatest amount of English manufactured goods, are the Chinese; and it so happens that the Chinese possess a good deal of that commodity, which, being in great request every where, would be readily exchanged for cheap corn, namely, silver. Thus between the question examined in the following note and that of the English foreign corn trade, there is a close and very important relation.*

* See, further, Note on the Art of Colonization.

NOTE VIII.

MEANS OF EXTENDING FREE TRADE TO THE WHOLE
COAST OF CHINA.

Interest of the Americans in this question—Chinese restrictions on trade—the Chinese people more inclined to commerce than the English or Americans—Chinese government dislikes foreign trade on political grounds—restrictions lead to a free trade—description of the free trade which actually takes place in China—obstacles to the extension of this free trade—several modes of removing those obstacles—one mode will endanger the trade between America and China—safest, cheapest, and best mode, commercial stations near the coast of China—to be formed, if not by Englishmen, then by Americans.

A GREAT change in the English trade with the Chinese is about to take place. The strict monopoly of that trade by the holders of India stock will presently cease. The English will soon be free, so far as their own government is concerned, to trade with the Chinese; but it does not follow that the Chinese will be free to trade with the English. To every trade there must be two parties; and the advantages derived from trade

depend on combination of power, or concert, for the distribution of employments. How are the English to obtain cheap silver, the produce of Chinese labour, wherewith to purchase cheap corn, the produce of Virginian labour, if the Chinese are not permitted to buy hardware and cotton goods, the produce of English labour? The escape of the English from a certain restraint will not of itself set the Chinese free. On the contrary, there appears some reason to fear, that the removal of restraints on the English may lead to greater restraints on the Chinese; and not merely as respects their trade with the English, but also in their trade with the Americans and others. And, at any rate, the trade between England and China could not be much enlarged without removing the actual restrictions on that trade, which are independent of the English, which depend either on the Chinese government or on the habits of the Chinese people. The nature of those restrictions and the means of entirely removing them form the subject of the following remarks, which are addressed to the Americans as well as to the English; seeing that both nations are concerned in the establishment of a free and secure trade with China, and that if the English will not establish such a trade the Americans may do it for them, as will be shown presently. If I were to add, that some steps had been taken with this view by Americans, not a

few of the English would be jealous of their "transatlantic brethren." Good! the sooner the two nations begin to rival each other in undertakings of this kind, the better for both of them.

Much as the English and Americans are given to trade, in that respect they are far surpassed by the people of China. "The propensity to truck, barter and exchange," which Adam Smith describes as the original cause of wealth and civilization, (it is the first cause after a surplus produce has been obtained by combination of power) is stronger and much more general in China than in any other country. Upon this point there is abundant evidence.* Yet the Chinese have made less progress in the art of navigation than any other people addicted to commerce; and their government exceeds all others, whether of past or present times, in animosity to foreign trade. Upon these main facts, the commercial disposition of the Chinese people, their ignorance of navigation, and the dislike of their government to foreign trade, must turn every speculation on the present subject.

The people of China are most desirous to trade with foreigners; but their ignorance of navigation prevents them from trading out of China. Their foreign trade, therefore, is necessarily conducted

* For the information of Americans some curious evidence of the industry, skill and commercial disposition, of the Chinese people is printed in the Appendix (No. 1.)

in China, and depends on the presence of foreign dealers and foreign ships. This point should be carefully borne in mind. Trade with the Chinese never has been, and for ages to come never will be, conducted without the presence of foreign dealers and foreign ships on the coast of China..

But the Chinese government detests or rather dreads foreigners, and lays all sorts of restrictions on their presence in China, confining them to a single port and subjecting them to many insults and injuries. If the propensity of foreigners to trade with the Chinese, and of the Chinese to trade with foreigners, were not stronger than the Chinese government, there would be no foreign trade in China. That government, however, has not much power over its own subjects. The men who compose it are, not Chinese, but Tartars who conquered China about two hundred years ago. Like the Mahomedans who conquered India, and the English who conquered and colonized Ireland, they are perfectly distinct from the subject race. The weakness of the rulers of China arises partly from their foreign origin and partly from the great extent of their empire. Such power as they possess depends solely on the ignorance and timidity of their subjects. Hence their dread of foreigners and their apparent animosity to foreign trade. If people could buy and sell without personal intercourse, the Tartar government of China would, by all accounts, encourage foreign

trade for the sake of revenue. It is not the trade which they dislike, but the traders. Nor is their dread of foreigners surprising. "The history of European commerce in the East is really nothing but the history of a continued series of usurpations; nor can any one acquainted with the subject feel surprised, that such native princes as had the means excluded those from their territories, whose object was, not to maintain a fair and friendly commerce, but to extort oppressive privileges and to make conquests."* But, in addition to the fear lest foreigners should make conquests in China, the rulers of that country, being themselves foreigners and conquerors, dread lest their own subjects should be led, by intercourse with other foreigners, to think of rebellion. We have it in evidence that the mandarins of China, were, like the mandarins of England, terrified at the great French revolution. Every restriction which the government of China imposes on the intercourse between its subjects and foreigners, its acuteness and diligence in limiting that intercourse to what is indispensable for carrying on a very limited trade, the strict enforcement of rules by which foreigners were prevented from moving beyond a narrow spot set apart for their use, and foreign women are excluded from China, the care with which on such occasions as em-

* Edinburgh Review, No. CIV.

bassies to Peking foreigners have been guarded, watched and led, as it were caged, through the empire ; all these, and many more practices of the same kind, may be traced to a political feeling ; to a nervous horror of revolutionary principles. The emperor and his mandarins are anti-jacobins ; not stout, like George III. and his boroughmongers, but very timid, being enervated by gluttony, excessive venery and the use of opium.

But the feebleness and cowardice of the Chinese government have two opposite effects upon trade ; producing numerous legal restrictions, and encouraging the people to set those restrictions at naught. Wheresoever trade is restricted there are smugglers. On the coast of China, where every body, opportunity serving, is a trader, all the people are smugglers ; not excepting the officers employed to prevent smuggling. Of the foreign trade of China, but a small part is carried on according to law. Moreover, the legal trade, in which there are only seven Chinese dealers, and which is confined to a small number of commodities, is a trade by which foreigners lose. The English East India Company would have lost more than they have gained by the legal trade, if they had traded to the same extent without a monopoly of the *British* market. There will be no legal trade in China when the company's monopoly of the British market shall cease. My authority for this statement is Mr. Marjori-

banks, chief of the company's factory at Canton. The following question and answer occur in his late examination before a committee of the house of commons:—*Q.* “ If the tendency of the trade in China is to get into the smuggling line, will not the company, acting on different principles and being from its circumstances unable to enter into that trade, be at a disadvantage against persons who have no scruples of that description?—*A.* If the question put to me contemplate the subversion of the company, I think we should be all smugglers in China together, *and there would be no legal trade in China.*” Just so: when there shall not be any body exclusively privileged to sell tea in England, nobody will buy tea of the seven privileged Chinese tea dealers. The English monopoly supports the Chinese monopoly: put down the one, and down goes the other. To some extent, every witness examined by the house of commons helps to confirm this opinion; and none more effectually than the servants of the company, who seem to have overlooked that an argument against their own privileges would be drawn from their admission, that the Canton monopoly depends on the monopoly in Leadenhall street. On other occasions the partizans of the company have taken great pains to conceal the importance of the illegal trade; perceiving, of course, that if that illegal trade, in which they take no direct part, should appear more import-

ant than the legal trade, their monopoly of the English market and of the coast of China as an English trading station, would be considered doubly unjust and injurious to the English people. With this view they have spoken in sneering terms of the illegal trade, calling it the smuggling trade, and swearing that "respectable merchants" would not engage in it; the fact being, all the while, that a large proportion of the smuggling trade consists of the sale of opium to the Chinese; that the importation of opium is strictly prohibited by the Chinese government, "on a moral principle," as Mr. Marjoribanks assures us; and that the opium smuggled into China is grown by the company in India, sold by the company, with a full knowledge of its destination, to those who smuggle it into China, and smuggled into China by means of licenses from the company, without which the foreign smuggler could not enter the Chinese seas. So much for the delicacy of the most "respectable merchants" in matters of trade. But, in truth, those who conduct the illegal trade of China do not smuggle, properly speaking. They buy and sell whatever they please, of whom and to whom they please, without let or hindrance from the government. The imperial edicts, which forbid the Chinese to quit their own country for any purpose, and which declare that no Chinese, save only the seven Hong merchants of Canton, shall

deal with foreigners; these orders are all moonshine, mere sham, as were the English laws against bribing at elections. The Chinese mandarins, like the English boroughmongers, are amongst the first to treat the law as a dead letter. Thus, whilst, legally, trade is no where so much restricted as in China, the Chinese enjoy greater freedom of trade than any other commercial people; as will appear by the following instructive, and, one may add, entertaining account of what is called the smuggling trade.

Extracts from Dobell's Residence in China.

“ In defiance of an annual edict from the emperor, making it death to smuggle opium, the enormous quantity of nearly 4000 chests is imported every year to Macao and Whampao. * * * * * It is a business that all the inferior mandarins, and some of the higher ones, their protectors, engage in; so that opium is carried through the streets of Macao in the most barefaced manner, in the open day. Large boats armed, having from thirty to forty men, ply between Macao and Canton when that market offers an advantageous price.

* * * * *

“ I have known many persons send large sums of specie by these boats to Macao, at a moderate

rate, and never heard of an accident happening to them in any way. All metals are prohibited from being exported, except zinc; there are, however, immense quantities smuggled into the English East India cotton ships, whenever they wish to buy more than the portion allowed by government.”—Vol. ii. p. 148.

“The Chinese have an extensive foreign commerce carried on by their own junks to Japan, Cochin China, Siam, Tonquin, Sumatra, Java, Borneo, Macassar, and indeed to all the Indo-Chinese islands. The Chinese declare this trade is the most important of any of their external relations;* and we may believe them when there are said to be upwards of 40,000 tons of shipping occupied with that and the salt trade. We know, also, that a Chinese junk, bound to the islands, carried a cargo of from 3 to 500,000 dollars’ value in China ware, nankeens, silks, ready-made clothes, books, writing-paper, ironmongery, tea, instruments of husbandry, iron, cloth, &c. &c.”—Vol. ii. p. 175.

“Nothing can be more barefaced than the manner in which smuggling is conducted in open day at Whampao.”—Vol. ii. p. 132.

* It is wholly contrary to law.

*Extracts from the Evidence delivered before the
Select Committee of the House of Commons, on
the Affairs of the East India Company, &c.
First Report.*

CHARLES MARJORIBANKS, Esq., a servant of the East India Company in their China factory for seventeen years, the greater part of that time resident in China.

“ Has any change taken place in the trade within your recollection ?—Yes, very considerable changes have taken place in the foreign trade generally. One of the greatest changes which has taken place, and which, in my own opinion, will sooner or later affect the security of our trade, is THE ENORMOUS EXTENT OF THE SMUGGLING TRADE NOW CARRIED ON IN CHINA, amongst the islands in the mouth of the Canton river, to a very great extent indeed ; so much so, that if the Chinese government had the inclination, *I do not imagine they possess the means of putting it down*, at least by any marine force which they have.

“ Will you be good enough to state to the committee if you know in what articles, besides opium, the smuggling trade is carried on upon the coast of China ?—I conceive that at present it extends to articles, *more or less, of every description* ; not on the coast of China, but among the islands in the mouth of the Canton river.”—

“ Articles of British manufacture? — I am not aware of any individual instance where smuggling of articles of British manufacture has existed; *but I know nothing to preclude it.*

“ You have stated that the smuggling trade in China has become very extensive; has not the increase of that smuggling trade a tendency to injure the fair trade? — I think it has a tendency to do so, in as far as articles smuggled into the country that evade duty can be sold at a profit, when articles which pay government duties cannot.” — “ Is not the opium trade in China, which you state to exist to the extent of 13,000,000 or 14,000,000 of dollars a year, entirely an illicit trade? — *Entirely prohibited by the Chinese government.*

“ Has not the Chinese government in its conduct towards foreigners, who have attempted to fix themselves in their harbours, shewn itself a shrewd government, acutely understanding its own interests? — I think that the Chinese are a highly intelligent people, remarkable for their industry and perseverance; but I think they are oppressed with one of the most corrupt governments that ever weighed down the energies of a people.

“ If it should be the case, that the American or foreign merchant has carried on a trade of this (prohibited) description with profit, when the Company have been carrying it on with loss,

would not that prove that their trade has been, in this article at least, better conducted than that of the Company?—It might not prove that it was better conducted, for it might arise from the circumstances I have stated, of some of those goods having been smuggled into China, having evaded the Chinese duties.”—“ If the tendency of the trade in China is to get into the smuggling line, will not the Company, acting upon different principles, and being from its circumstances unable to enter into that trade, be at a disadvantage against persons who have no scruples of that description?—If the question put to me contemplates the subversion of the Company, *I think we should be all smugglers in China together, and there would then be no legal trade in China.*

“ Would not the temptation to smuggling be irresistible if the trade was carried on in small vessels?—I imagine that individuals who do not much respect the laws of the country, will not consent to pay duties which they can evade by acting in opposition to those laws.”—“ Is the smuggling carried on among the Chinese by what are called outside merchants?—This term is applied in common to all merchants not members of the Hong; some of them are smugglers, some mere shopmen.”

JOHN FRANCIS DAVIES, Esq., a servant of the East India Company in China, who travelled for six months through the interior of the empire.

“ What impression, in your opinion, would be produced upon the Chinese generally by throwing open the trade to *British merchants generally*?—*The whole body of smugglers at Canton would rejoice.* The government would, in the first instance, view it with jealousy, as they view every change; and when they came to lose their revenue, they would view it with hostility. They have already, in consequence of the *extraordinary amount of smuggling, (not only relative to contraband articles, such as opium, but in the case of articles that pay duty)* lost so much, that they have issued edict after edict directed against those individuals and those nations who principally partake in this smuggling trade; and it is impossible to suppose that they would go on *ad infinitum* in their endurance, or consent to the conversion of the whole trade of Canton into a smuggling intercourse.*

“ Can you state the probable amount of the tonnage employed in the country trade carried on between India and China, with reference to the Company’s tonnage?—The report on the table speaks to that fact: it is nearly equal, at all

* It is a question of power, not of inclination.

events, to that of the Company. It arises, not from there being so large a quantity of tonnage actually employed, but from the quickness of the returns, and from the comparative smallness of distance, enabling one ship to make two voyages in the year.”—“Is that trade carried on without the intervention or assistance of the Company’s servants at Canton at all?—*A very large portion of it consists of smuggling trade*, and therefore must be entirely out of the Company’s cognizance.

“Is there not a very considerable smuggling trade in other articles imported into China from Europe?—I believe that a great deal has been smuggled into China.

“Have the Hong merchants themselves taken part in this smuggling trade?—Far from it; they were sold, not to Hong merchants, but to outside shopmen.

“You were understood to state that some of the Hong merchants have been ruined by their mixing with the smuggling trade?—Not at all; they have been ruined *by the smuggling trade*. They pay heavy duties and exactions to the government, on account of the advantages which their situation affords them in the monopoly of the regular trade; and, as the smuggling trade must necessarily be carried on by persons who do not pay those heavy exactions, and who in fact frequently evade the regular duties, they must ne-

cessarily be ruined by the extension of such a course of transactions.

“ Have you any means of judging what proportion of the whole imports into China consist of the smuggling trade?—It is impossible to say exactly how much, because the smuggling is secret, and therefore not so open to investigation : but with regard to opium, we know that the amount of the annual importation into China is upwards of 10,000,000 of dollars.

“ Were you at Canton in September 1828?—I was.

“ Did you hear that a ship called the *Merope* had returned to Canton after having been a voyage as high up as to Ningpo, having made a very profitable voyage and converted the whole of her cargo to a very large extent into specie?—*It must have been entirely surreptitious, if she did;* and I judge that her cargo was opium.

“ Do you conceive that such a thing would be possible?—I should say very improbable, until the fact spoke for itself; from surmise, I should say it was a thing that could not easily occur, but that *by smuggling* a ship might manage to introduce goods in that way.

“ You have stated that the Chinese government have issued many edicts against smuggling, have those edicts been carried into force or not?—They certainly have, *to the utmost capability of the weak Chinese government.* I would say,

that they have rather shewn the hostility of the Chinese government to the system, than that they have been very effective in suppressing it.

“Do you consider that smuggling has been decreased by them, or the contrary?—I should say that *the weak and ill-organized government of China cannot follow up its edicts by a corresponding effectiveness; and they have probably, in a great measure, proved unavailing.*”

CHARLES MARJORIBANKS, Esq.

“Has not the smuggling trade in camlets increased?—A good many Dutch camlets have been imported by Dutch ships; and camlets have also been imported on private account.

“Are the committee to understand, that although the trade of opium is prohibited under very severe penalties, yet that the quantity imported, and the prices at which it is sold, are as regularly known as any other article which is authorized and regularly imported?—*It is made no secret of*; it is generally known by the parties who deal in it, and they communicate it to others. *The prices of opium are always given in the Canton Register, a public newspaper.*

“Can you inform the committee how the trade of opium is carried on?—When I first went to China, the opium trade was at Macao, from which it went to Whampoa, and is now confined to the islands at the mouth of the river. The opium

smuggling boats go alongside the ships in the open face of day, and the opium is delivered to them on their presenting what is called an opium order from the agent in Canton.

“Is this trade carried on within the view of the officers of government and the men-of-war boats of the Chinese?—Frequently within the view of the men-of-war boats.

“Are these boats stationed on the part of the Chinese authorities within reach and view of this trade?—Not regularly stationed: they frequently go and come there. *They are constantly manœuvring about, and often report to the Canton authorities that they have swept the seas of all smuggling ships. The ships remain there just the same.*

“Then, in point of fact, it may be said that the smuggling trade in opium is carried on with the connivance of the Chinese authorities?—With the connivance of the lower government authorities; I am not prepared to say of the higher authorities.”—“Is that the case in the smuggling of other articles?—Yes, it is.

“Under what privilege is silver exported?—The Chinese laws prohibit the exportation of any metal; dollars are allowed to be exported from China, *but not bullion, but it has always been exported to a large amount.*

“Are not the smugglers of China a very powerful body? do not they move in considerable fleets upon the shore?—Not in fleets; their boats are

very well manned and armed.”—“*Do not they set the government at defiance?—Entirely, I should say, when they have sea-room.*

“Do you suppose that the government is capable of keeping them under?—*They possess no marine force capable, in my opinion, of suppressing them.*

“Is the force of the smugglers upon the increase or upon the decrease?—*The smuggling trade of China is materially upon the increase.*

“Are the transactions of the smuggling trade carried on with as much fidelity and regularity on the part of the Chinese as the transactions of the regular trade?—*With wonderful regularity, considering the nature of the trade; certainly not with the same regularity as those of the legal trade.*”

MR. JOHN AKEN, formerly master of the Investigator, and afterwards commander of the Exmouth, trading between India and China.

“Is it not a fact, that they (the outside merchants) bring the boats alongside, and then it is thrown out of the ship into the boats?—Yes: when I sold my opium I gave an order upon the chief officer to deliver it; but the person to whom I sold *it takes the risk entirely in taking it from the ship; he pays me for it before he gets the order.*”

“What does he generally pay you with?—In dollars, *or sy-ccc.**

* Silver bullion, of which the exportation is prohibited.

“Do you happen to know the method by which the opium is smuggled into the country?—They take it from alongside in smuggling boats that are well manned and armed, and there are a great many rivers, branches and islands, and different places, and they are off directly with it, *and they put all the government boats at defiance.* I have seen that myself. I have seen four mandarin boats surrounding my ship when I had thirty chests of opium to smuggle, and I was prevented from going to sea on account of the opium, and I sold it to the people. I went down myself and saw the way that they smuggled it; they stripped the chest entirely away, and took nothing but the opium, and put it into bags; and we opened the lower-deck port, and in one moment they put the opium into the boat, and all hands were off in a moment: we did that in a very heavy shower of rain. There was a cry out about three minutes afterwards, but the boat was gone like a shot.”—
“Were the mandarin boats lying near?—One was lying a-head touching the ship, another was lying at the stern, and another was lying upon the opposite side.”—“They were there to prevent smuggling?—Yes.

“*Do you obtain greater or less price for your opium in proportion to the degree of vigilance of the mandarin boats?—No, I never knew any difference made on that account.*

“If the mandarin boats had not been there,

should you have obtained a larger price?—I do not think we should have got more; *they always make certain of it; and it always struck me, that there was an understanding between the smugglers and the mandarin boats; there is an apparent vigilance kept up which has no existence in my opinion. I have been told so by a number of people.*

“ Might not other commodities, of small bulk, be introduced into China by the same means?—*I should think they could, very easily.*

“ Do you happen to know whether it is a practice with regard to any other commodities except opium?—Saltpetre, which is a bulky article, is smuggled. *I used to smuggle it myself; at least I carried it there, and it was smuggled by the people to whom I sold it.*

“ Is saltpetre a prohibited article in China?—No, you can sell it to the government if you please; but we cannot sell it so well to the government. We can generally get about two dollars a pecul by smuggling it.

“ Is that on account of the duty paid to government?—I think it is.”—“ Have you known of any other article being smuggled?—I think sometimes broad cloth is smuggled.”—“ By the Americans or the English?—By the English. I once carried two bales of cloth, and it was smuggled, I know, but wherefore I cannot say, because it did not belong to me.”

Second Report of Minutes of Evidence.

Mr. JOHN ARGYLE MAXWELL, who resided at Singapore for more than six years, and who went several times to Canton.

“Do you know whether there is much smuggling in China in the articles of export?—As far as my own experience went, I found the parties who were not Hong merchants *ready to make a bargain either way*, that is, to deliver the article as a smuggled article at Lintin, or in the usual way at Whampoa.

“Have you ever known of the country ships proceeding to Chinese ports, north of Canton, and trading with the natives?—I have heard of several of those adventures.

“Can you state what the cargoes were that they took?—The cargoes generally consisted of opium almost altogether; in some cases they took a little saltpetre, I believe.

“Did they find any difficulty in effecting sales with the natives?—I understood that they always effected sales; I did not hear that there were any extraordinary difficulties.

“What were the ports they went to?—Many of the ports have escaped my recollection, but I remember the port of Chingchoo, and Chusen and the island of Formosa.

“Do you know where these ports were situated?—Chingchoo is in the province of Fokien.

“What reception did you understand the natives gave those adventurers?—I believe they gave a good reception. A Spanish gentleman, who was a supercargo in one of the expeditions, told me that he landed on Formosa, and walked several miles. I recollect his mentioning particularly that he observed the remains of European houses there, which he considered to have been the remains of those that were occupied by the former Dutch factory at Formosa.

“Do you know how long it is since that factory was removed?—I should think more than 100 years.

“Did you understand that the sales which were effected at the northern ports were at a considerable advance above the Canton prices?—I could not understand that there was any great advance. I heard the parties mention that *they found the Chinese dealers there in possession of regular price-currents from Canton, stating the stock on hand of opium, and other circumstances connected with the market.*

Captain ABEL COFFIN.

“Have you been at Sincapore and Siam?—I have.”—“Have you found any quantity of Chinese junks there?—At Siam* a large quantity.

“What quantity have you ever seen there at one time?—I should think eighty.

“Of what size?—Some of them would carry

700 or 800 tons, and some others perhaps 200 or 300.”—“Do these junks carry on an extensive trade with different parts of China besides Canton?—They are principally from other parts; very few from Canton.

“Do they import teas in any considerable quantities into Siam?—They do.

“Did you find any Chinese teas there?—A large quantity. I should have had no difficulty at any time in loading one, two, or three ships of the size that I had there.”—“What quality of tea?—Principally black teas: Souchong and Congou of very good quality.”

Extract from a Statement delivered to the Parliamentary Committee, by Mr. CRAWFURD. Third Report.

“The Chinese junks, properly constructed, pay no measurement duty, and no *kumsha* or present; duties, however, are paid upon goods exported and imported, which seem, however, to differ at the different provinces. They are highest at Amoy, and lowest in the island of Hainan. The Chinese traders of Siam informed me that they carried on the fairest and easiest trade, subject to the fewest restrictions in the ports of Ningpo and Sianghai in Chokian, and Souchon in Kiannan. Great dexterity seems every where to be exercised by the Chinese in evading the duties. One practice, which is very often followed, will

afford a good example of this. The coasting trade of China is nearly free from all duties and other imposts. The merchant takes advantage of this, and intending in reality to proceed to Siam or Cochin China, for example, clears a junk out for the island of Hainan, *and thus avoids the payment of duties. When she returns, she will lie four or five days off and on at the mouth of the port, until a regular bargain be made with the custom-house officers for the reduction of duties. The threat held out in such cases is to proceed to another port, and thus deprive the public officers of their customary perquisites.* I was assured of the frequency of this practice by Chinese merchants of Cochin China, as well as by several commanders of junks at Singapore. From the last named persons I had another fact of some consequence, as connected with the Chinese trade, viz. that a good many of the junks carrying on trade with foreign ports to the westward of China, often proceeded on voyages to the northward in the same season. In this manner they stated that about twenty considerable junks, besides a great manysmall ones, proceeded annually from Canton to Souchon, one of the capitals of Kiannan, and in wealth and commerce the rival of Canton, where they sold about 200 chests of opium at an advance of fifty per cent. beyond the Canton prices. Another place where the Canton junks, to the number of five or six, repair annually, is

Chinchoo, in the province of Shanton, within the gulph of Pechely, or Yellow Sea, and as far north as the 37th degree of latitude."

WALTER STEVENSON DAVIDSON, Esq.* a merchant, a naturalized Portuguese, chief of a large mercantile house at Macao.

"Have you any means of judging whether the trouble attending the sale of opium is less now since the ships were removed from Whampoa, and stationed themselves at Lintin, outside the river?—I should say, that I do not believe there is much difference in the trouble, but a vast difference in the anxiety; because, in the one case, they were liable to seizure any day, in the other case they lie in a spot where *they can defend themselves against any power that can come against them.*

"You mean to say, that the trade in your time, whilst the ships lay at Whampoa, was more difficult than it is now?—More full of anxiety; *there was no difficulty in it: it was a very good business.*

"Did you ever know of any other articles except opium being smuggled?—I have heard of a great many, but I never smuggled any other articles myself in the import trade.

"With regard to the exports?—In exports *I smuggled very largely of silver, because it was a prohibited article as well as opium, and so was*

* Now a banker in London.

tutenog I believe ; and the rule which guided me was, that I would smuggle the articles which were prohibited, but not those upon which a direct duty was laid.

“What responsibility did you consider to attach to you as an agent, selling a prohibited article like opium ?—*In a pecuniary point of view I never considered it was a responsibility that could be valued, nor did I ever charge, or pretend to have a right to charge, any thing for it ;* personally, of course, every man who resides in China runs a great risk ; the government, for instance, as I have stated, knew full well that a ship was at Whampoa with a quantity of opium, that she was to my consignment ; and they might have imprisoned me any day, and said, till you pay a 100,000 tales you shall not be released.

“Did that ever happen during your residence there ?—Never.

“Did you ever hear of its happening ?—*Never ; I do not think that in the history of trade there has been an instance of it.*

“What risk do you consider you ran in smuggling silver ?—*None whatever, beyond the seizure of the silver, with which they are always exceedingly well satisfied.*”—“Have you known many seizures made ?—I have known some, but *very few indeed, the parties are so exceedingly expert.*

“In your time did the Chinese undertake to put the silver on board for you ?—Yes.

“What rate did you pay them for it?—I bought the silver of them, and they undertook to put it on board : it was delivered on board, and I paid them *sometimes before* and sometimes *after they brought me the captain's receipt for it*.

“Then your own risk was at an end?—Entirely, except when I chose to step out of the way and trusted them, which I have often done with all those parties, both in silver and in opium.

“Are you not aware that those custom house boats are moored a-stern and on the quarter of every vessel?—Custom-house boats are ; but I am not aware that the boats whose duty it is to seize those parties are moored there ; *they are far too weakly manned and armed*.”—“Are you aware that those boats permitted the opium to be landed?—*Decidedly*.”—“Could they prevent it if they pleased? “*That does not follow ; they may not be strong enough. I have known instances of the Chinese opium boats overpowering all force where it was a very large quantity, and it was worth their while killing and wounding men, but generally they do not attempt it*.”—“On such an occurrence happening have you ever known any notice taken of it by the government?—*Never*.”

Captain CHARLES HUTCHINSON, a commander in the navy, who commanded the ship called the *Bombay Castle*, from Liverpool to India, and remained in the latter place for five years. He went

three times to Canton, three several years, from Bombay, with cargoes of cotton and other Indian articles.

“Supposing the Chinese were to put a stop to the export of teas altogether, are you of opinion that the prohibition would be effectually enforced, so as to prevent its being sent to Singapore?—I think it is extremely probable that they would be enabled still to bring it to Singapore, but I am not certain.

“What do you apprehend would be the effect in China of a total prohibition of the export of teas?—It would be difficult to say.* The Chinese government feel themselves to be *a very rotten sort of government ; they know that the people are ready to revolt in many of their provinces, and they would therefore be very cautious how they gave any cause of discontent to any part of their empire ;* but whether they are particularly afraid of that part of it situated near Canton, I cannot tell. There are some of the provinces where they are much more inclined to revolt and to resistance than in that, particularly the province of Chingchoo.

“You are aware that tea can be exported from other ports of China besides Canton, in Chinese junks?—Yes, because it is brought to Singapore from other parts.”—“*Is it brought from the tea provinces?—It is brought by canals to the coast, and then put on board the junks, who bring it to Singapore.*

“ Are the junks that come to Sincapore with tea loaded at Canton, or at ports nearer the growth of the tea ?—At ports nearer the growth of the tea, I believe ; I know they are not loaded at Canton.

“ Are there any goods that are reckoned prohibited goods in China exported by the country ships ?—*A large quantity in almost every ship ; they chiefly consist of cassia and a coarser kind of silk, upon which the duties are too heavy to be taken in the regular way ; they are therefore bargained for with the outside merchants, to be smuggled on board the ship, and it is done with as great facility as the regular trade ; the mandarins being all feed and permitting it.*

“ Did you ever know of an interruption to this irregular trade ?—*None whatever ; it is as easily carried on as the regular trade.*

“ Is a *large portion* of the assorted cargoes exported from China articles, prohibited or subject to such duties that they are generally smuggled ?—Yes.”—“ And with the knowledge and connivance of the mandarins ?—Certainly. There is an island near Whampoa called French Island, where those smugglers live. Goods intended to be smuggled are sent to French Island, and you receive notice the night before at what hour the cargo will be brought ; the mandarins then surround the ship, and wait for the smuggling boat ; when it comes alongside they send a man in a canoe to count the packages, that no more may

be brought to the ship than they have received their fee for. *In fact, their whole government is one system of corruption from top to bottom.*

“Do not you think that the facilities they afford to smuggling arise from an anxious desire to extend the foreign commerce?—*Certainly, in the people; not in the government, of course.*

“In the officers of the government, do you attribute it to a desire to obtain a suitable remuneration in return for the sum of money they have given for their offices?—*Certainly.*

“It being notorious that all those offices are paid for?—So I have always been told.

“Could not cotton goods be smuggled to other ports?—There was a difficulty in smuggling at other ports when I was in China, but some ships with opium succeeded to a certain extent. Since I left that country, I understand that they have smuggled to a larger amount, and I suppose other goods as well as opium.”—“Do you think that the smuggling could be carried on with the same ease at those other ports as at Canton?—I should think not, because at *Canton it is systematized.*”

Third Report of Minutes of Evidence.

JOHN STEWART, Esq. a member of the committee, who went to China seven times, in the years 1800, 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806, 1807-8, and in 1817.

“Is it your opinion that the Chinese government would find it very difficult to put an end to

the foreign commerce with England?—I think they could do it; but I am of opinion that if the Chinese government were to put an end to that commerce, it would produce great misery and distress in China, particularly at Canton, where it is carried on.

“ Would the government, in your opinion, be strong enough to accomplish the putting an end to the trade?—My opinion is, that an edict of the emperor of China might be so enforced as to put a stop to all the *regular* foreign trade carried on with China; but I DO NOT THINK THAT THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT COULD PREVENT SMUGGLING BEING CONTINUED FROM THE COAST OF CHINA, EVEN IF THEY PUT A STOP TO THE REGULAR TRADE.

“ Then you do not mean to say that you think the Chinese government would have power to put a final stop to the progress of the trade?—*No; I think that a smuggling trade would be carried on on the coast of China to a very considerable extent, in spite of any act that the Chinese government might adopt.*”

ROBERT RICKARDS, Esq. who resided in India twenty-four years, being on the Bombay establishment, and had during that time good opportunities of seeing what passed in the trade between India and China.

“ Are you aware of the peculiarities of the

Chinese government with regard to trade, and that a comparison cannot therefore be fairly made between India and China as to any expected increase?—I know that the Chinese government have imposed restrictive regulations upon the foreign trade of their own country ; but I know at the same time *that these regulations are completely set at nought by the commercial spirit of the people.*

“ If, therefore, English ships were prohibited going to China, I conceive that supplies of tea and other Chinese articles *might just as easily be got from Singapore, or Java, or other ports in the Eastern Archipelago,* as they can now from China itself. These then are the grounds of my belief that, under all circumstances, *we have the means of controlling the trade with China, even more effectually than the Chinese government itself;* for when the Chinese merchants and the mass of the community find that they have an interest in carrying on certain branches of trade, they will do it, as is sufficiently manifest in their importation of opium, and export of silver, *in spite of the most severe laws that can be enacted by their own government.*”

JOHN CRAWFURD, Esq., appointed parliamentary agent to the inhabitants of Calcutta. He resided in the Upper Provinces of the Bengal Presidency for five years, in Calcutta one year, in

Penang three years, and in Java six years. One year he went on a mission to Siam and Cochin China. He resided in Sincapore about three years; afterwards was appointed commissioner by the governor-general in the Birman Empire; then went as envoy from the governor-general to the court of Ava; after which he returned to Calcutta, and eventually to Europe.

“Supposing an interruption to take place in the European trade of China, are you of opinion that a considerable quantity of tea might be brought in Chinese vessels to Sincapore, or some other emporium in the Eastern Archipelago?—I conceive so. I think it was a great point, during the discussions respecting the former charter of the East India Company, to establish that fact themselves. Mr. Drummond, now lord Strathallan, gave it distinctly in evidence, that a very large quantity of tea might be imported into Europe through such a channel. The evidence is to be found upon the records of the Committee of the House of Commons, I think in 1812. It seemed, indeed, to be a settled point, especially in reference to the Phillipine islands and others. I have a short entry on this subject, taken out of a note book that I kept at Sincapore; it is dated the 22d of August, 1825, and is the result of a conversation with the commanders of some junks.—‘The tea consumed in Cochin China is brought from Tchaotchen, on the con-

finer of Canton and Fokien, but in the jurisdiction of the former, to Hainan, from which it comes to Saigun and other places. It is all the produce of Fokien. Into Saigun there are annually imported about 70,000 boxes of tea, of twenty catties each, and into Hué about 10,000 boxes. It is impossible to conjecture the quantity brought into Tonquin, as a great part of it is imported by land. The price of the ordinary qualities at Tchaotchen and Canton is twenty-six dollars per pecul. The same tea would be sold at Saigun for forty dollars. My informants state that any quantity whatever of tea may be imported into Singapore, which the market may demand, from Chaotcheou, Changlim, and other parts, either black or green. *The commanders of junks will do this in spite of any regulations to the contrary.' "*

JOHN STEWART, Esq., M. P.

" Do you think the trade could be carried on in the neighbourhood of Canton, in any of the islands?—Yes; I imagine that tea might be conveyed, and in all probability would be conveyed, to the islands on the coast of China; *it might be smuggled from thence, or it might be sent in Chinese vessels to the islands of the Eastern Archipelago, and could be exported from thence.*

" Would it be sufficient to supply the wants of this country?—If the Chinese permitted the ex-

port of tea in their own vessels, I am decidedly of opinion that a sufficient quantity might in that way be exported from China to supply the wants of all Europe.

“ Do you suppose that they would do that under such circumstances?—I think they would; the Chinese are a people of great commercial enterprise, and I think they would be disposed to send tea wherever they could find a sale for it with advantage.”

Captain JOHN MACKIE.

“ You have resided in India several years?—I have for ten years”—“ From what period?—From 1820 to the latter end of 1829.

“ Did you command a ship in the China trade?—I commanded a Spanish vessel on the coast of China.

“ What was this vessel engaged in?—In the opium trade.”—“ She was sailing under Spanish colours?—She was.

“ What ports of China have you visited?—I visited the port of Amoy, and all the ports between that and Canton.

“ Were you entirely engaged in the opium trade?—Entirely; I carried also a little salt-petre.

“ What was the name of the ship?—The St. Sebastian.

“ Whom was she owned by?—Spaniards.”—

“ Did any part of the cargo belong to British merchants ?—Entirely British.”—“ Can you state any other ports in China that you touched at besides Amoy ?—Not any other principal ports ; I touched at all the ports between Amoy and Canton.

“ You lay off some ports, did not you ?—I lay off the port called the Cape of Good Hope, and the island of Namoo.

“ At what distance is the Cape of Good Hope from Canton ?—About 300 miles to the north-east.

“ Did you find good shelter for your ship ?—Excellent ; all those harbours are as safe as the port of Canton itself.

“ Was the trade you carried on authorised by the laws of China ?—*I understood it was not authorised, but it was done quite openly.*

“ *In the same way, that the opium trade is carried on at Canton ?—The very same.*

“ Have you ever experienced any difficulty in carrying on the trade, although not formally sanctioned by the Chinese laws ?—*Never the least.*

“ Who were the parties with whom your trade was carried on ?—The Chinese merchants.

“ Resident at any particular points ?—Some of them from the city of Amoy, some from Ta-ho, and Namoo, and some from inland towns.

“ Have you got better prices for those articles than could be got at Canton ?—Yes.

“What was the difference of the price?—About 100 dollars upon a chest of opium, or 125, and sometimes 150, or even higher.

“Is that (the port of the Cape of Good Hope) near any town?—Yes, it is within fifteen miles of a very large city, the city of Ty-ho.

“From the time of your arrival how long were you detained before you disposed of the whole of your cargo?—From fifteen to twenty days.

“Why did you make your returns in bullion only?—I was particularly desired by the agents of the brig to take nothing else.

“Could you have had returns in the produce of the country?—*I could have had returns in any produce of the provinces, such as sugar, tea, cassia, tortoiseshell, nankeens, or anything that could be had.*

“You would have had no difficulty in completing your cargo of these articles?—Not the least.

“In what manner is the produce of the north-eastern provinces sent to Canton?—I presume it is principally sent by sea, from the number of large junks always upon the coast.

“Have you seen teas sent by sea?—Yes; I have been on board of two junks entirely loaded with tea.

“What was the size of them?—They could not have been less than 200 tons.

“From whence did they come?—They came from Amoy, and they were bound to Canton.

“ Did you board the junks?—I boarded both of them, and sent letters by them to Canton.”—
“ Were those letters regularly received?—They were received in due course.

“ Do you think you could have loaded your vessel with teas of good quality?—*I have no doubt I could of the very best quality. I have no doubt I could have had any sort of Chinese produce that I wished.*

“ What species of woollens do you think you could have disposed of?—Principally long ells and fine broad cloth; blankets and camlets also would have sold very well; *they are in ready demand all along the coast of China.*

“ Were there any duties paid to the government upon those cargoes?—*I never paid any duties; but I understood that upon all opium that is taken away from the ships the inferior officers of the government get about twenty dollars for every chest; the Chinese pay that themselves; the ships pay nothing.*

“ Did you ever pay any port-charges of any kind?—Never.

“ Were you ever annoyed by any of the Chinese authorities?—No. *I have been requested, as a favour, to shift my situation, as the principal officer was coming; and I have gone away and come again, in one or two days.*

“ *Perhaps a legitimate trade was not your object?—Not at all; we were trading in prohibited articles.*

“ Do you imagine that the contraband trade is more profitable than the authorised trade?—*I have never been in the authorised trade, and therefore cannot state that.*

“ Did any other British ships under the British flag prosecute the same trade that you did at that time?—Yes; there was an English ship, the *Merope*, belonging to Calcutta; the *Velletta*; the *Eugenia*; the *Fanecena*, and the *Dhaule* schooner.

“ What were those vessels?—All English vessels belonging to the port of Calcutta.

“ Where were they trading to?—To *Formosa*, and the port of *Nimpo*, which is considerably to the north.

“ Is not that in the province of *Kiangnan*?—I believe it is.

“ Did those ships go to *Amoy*?—One of them I think did, but they did nothing; they knew that nothing could be done by the merchants; the *Merope* touched off *Amoy*, but did not go in, because she could not trade in opium.

“ Had you any communication with the commanders of those vessels?—Frequently, although we had different interests, all except the *Merope*.

“ Was your interest the same as the *Merope*?—She had an agent of ours.

“ Did you understand from the commanders of those vessels, that they carried on trade as easily as you did?—With the same facilities; although

I believe I was rather more fortunate than they were, being engaged in the trade earlier.

“ At the ports you have named, do you know whether the import and export duties are paid to the government?—*I am not aware of the duties; I never heard the duties mentioned.*

“ Did the Americans ever engage in this trade?—American vessels have gone to the coast, but I believe on British account.

“ Did the British vessels you have named visit any ports besides those you have mentioned?—The Merope traded to the port of Chingchoo and the island of Formosa.

“ Did the Merope go to Nimpo and the Cape of Good Hope?—*Yes; she touched at every port on the coast.*

“ Which do you conceive is the best station for carrying on the trade?—The best station I ever found, was between the island of Namoo and the Cape of Good Hope.

“ Why do you conceive that to be better?—Being the centre between two very large towns.

“ Have you ever been off the province of Fokien?—Yes.

“ What harbour did you go into there?—I went into one of the ports of Chingchoo.

“ What was the species of cultivation you saw when you landed there?—The only species of cultivation I have seen was rice and sugar.

“ Is the trade, which you have described as

being carried on when you were there, still carried on?—It is.

“ In what year was this?—In 1823 and 1824. Afterwards I lay as a depôt-ship at Lintin.”—
“ How long were you altogether in China?—Four years and a half.

“ In what year were the British ships you have mentioned there?—They were there in the same year as myself; and I left some of them lying as depôt-ships at Lintin; they are lying there now as depôt-ships.

“ Do you know of any ships having been there last year?—No; I do not know of any ship; there was one vessel went up in 1828 when I was there, and delivered a cargo upon the coast.

“ What are the depôt-ships?—*They are ships that lie outside of the island of Macao, to receive opium, or any other goods that are wished to be deposited on board of them.* •

“ *Then you have no knowledge of any lawful trade carried on there at all?—Not the least.*

“ Were the others obliged to move sometimes as well as you?—*Yes; we moved as a favour to the mandarins; the mandarins come down once or twice a year, and send a person to warn you to shift yourselves.*

“ You were obliged to shift your station?—We were not obliged to do this, but *it was to favour them, that they might make a report that it was all clear.*

“What number of ships do you remember there at any one time?—I have seen as many as 20 ships at one time.

“How many European ships?—I have seen 10 European ships, and a considerable number of American ships.”

If this be not free trade, what is? Establish a trade in corn and Manchester goods on the same footing between England and America; in that case it would be quite needless to repeal the English corn laws and American tariff. But here we must draw a distinction of first-rate consequence. The foreign trade of China, though perfectly free in its nature, is restricted in extent. Though free from bonds, permits and taxes, it cannot at present be extended beyond the Bocca Tigris, and even on that one spot it is not secure. Upon this distinction the whole question turns. The people of England, by paying an extravagant price for tea, have enabled twenty-four men in London and seven men at Canton to carry on a trade which is called legal, but which ought to be called the losing trade. How to increase this trade, is not worth asking: the grand point is to extend, not to alter, the free trade, which the Chinese call *Smug-pigeon*, and which, though of limited extent, is perfect in its kind.

What then is it that prevents the free trade from spreading to the whole coast of China and

increasing beyond any assignable limit? The political fears of the Chinese government. Therefore, says an Englishman, send another embassy to Pekin; instruct the ambassador to swear, like Lord Amherst, that he has no commercial objects, that he is sent across the world "to manifest the regard of his Britannic majesty for his Imperial majesty, and to improve the relations of amity that so happily subsisted between their illustrious parents Kien-lung and George the third": but this time do not trust altogether to the ambassador's skill in the art of lying; back him with armed ships; order him to talk of English conquests in India; tell him to frighten the mandarins by a display of English power, and if necessary by the use of force: this is the way to calm the political fears of the Chinese government. And to destroy it likewise, we may add. No one who is acquainted with that government can doubt, that such a mission, if given, not to a priggish lord of the bed-chamber, but to a man (a man, said Bonaparte, is wanted in China) would be entirely successful; that it would open the whole coast of China to the presence of Englishmen and English ships. But this object accomplished in this way, what would be the other consequences of thus exposing the weakness of the Chinese government to its own subjects and to foreign nations? Look to it Jonathan! John Bull would have gone to work in

this way long ago, if the English Hong had not been deeply interested in preserving every bar to the extension of free trade in China. The English Hong is at end. Be alive, Jonathan! Your smug-pigeon with the China-man is in danger.

Even mere threats from the English government, though couched, as no doubt they would be, in the form of a demand for redress of grievances, would, if they had for object the particular advantage of English traders in China, be viewed with jealousy by several governments of Europe, and still more by the United States. Suppose, however, that disregarding the jealousy of other nations, the English had compelled the mandarins to establish the trade of Englishmen in China on a satisfactory basis, would not the Dutch, the Russians, the French, and above all the Americans, demand, each nation for itself, as with equal facility they all might obtain, similar concessions from the feeble mandarins? Such demands on the part of some, at least, of those nations, would, it seems hardly doubtful, be the inevitable consequence of the successful use of force or threats by the English government. Thus the weakness of the government of China would be exposed in more than one instance, to its own subjects and to other nations. Other exposures of the same kind could not but ensue. Foreigners of all nations would enter China and further expose to the people, not the weakness only, but

the iniquity also, of the government. Next, the foreigners of each nation, having obtained some footing in China, would, if we conjecture from experience, seek to obtain privileges, each party striving to gain more than its rivals, and to injure them as much as possible. Either the nature of man is not always the same, or the history of European settlements in distant countries is false, if this would not be the case. Considering also, that each party of foreigners in China would be so far removed from the control of its own government as to act almost without responsibility, there is reason to expect that the rivalry amongst those foreign adventurers would not be confined to trade, but would extend, as soon as it had been shown that the mandarins were unable to resist aggression, to interference between the people and their masters, to the excitement of revolt and civil war, and finally to territorial acquisition. In this way, contests must arise between some of those parties of foreign adventurers; and by degrees each party would, probably, enlist its distant government in the quarrel, until, at length, the miserable government of China being dissolved, or rather dissolving as soon as its weakness had been made conspicuous, China would become, as Hindostan has been in modern times, a theatre of war for foreign nations. What has preserved China from the fate of India? The constancy of the mandarins in rejecting, as

they would have avoided contact with the plague, every proposal from foreigners for the establishment of friendly intercourse. *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*, has been the never-failing answer of the Chinese government to offers of friendship and advantage from other governments. In vain did the Dutch ambassador Titzing, a fat man, crawl upon all fours into the imperial presence, and remaining in that posture, beat his head nine times upon the ground; in vain did the lords Macartney and Amherst exhaust the arts of their craft to wheedle the lords of China into a belief that it was for the advantage of the great emperor to be on terms of friendship with the illustrious king; in vain have been self-abasement, rich presents, flattery, coaxing, prayers, lies and remonstrances, when employed by the governments of Europe in order to obtain such a footing in China as might have furnished pretexts for measures of another kind. The existence of the government of China has been preserved by the constancy of the mandarins in rejecting offers of foreign friendship. The utter impracticability of the Tartars is their only defence. Break through that single barrier, and they must be swept away by a flood of internal revolt and foreign pretension.

If the existing government of foreigners were destroyed, it must be succeeded by another government of foreigners; since the ignorant,

timid and slavish, people of China, being incapable of governing themselves, would tacitly invite foreigners to rule them, and would find nation after nation eager to undertake the task. In the end probably, the English, who command the sea, would govern China as they govern India; and that the people of China would in the long run gain incalculably by such a change, there cannot be the least doubt. But what in the meanwhile would become of the foreign trade of China? And what could the people of England gain by ruling the Chinese empire? Not reckoning the gratification of national pride as an advantage, they would gain nothing beyond free commercial intercourse with the Chinese people. But they might miss this, aiming at it in this way; not to mention what they might lose in the confusion arising from the jealousy of other states and the destruction of the Chinese government.

Still, if it were impossible to counteract the political fears of the mandarins otherwise than by adopting measures of compulsion under the name of diplomacy, such measures, whatever the consequences likely to result from them, might be thought expedient. But considering the immediate evils that might arise from measures of compulsion, and the jealousy with which they would be viewed by the Americans at least, such measures, however easy, however sure of ultimate

success, and however just when viewed with a mercantile eye, will not be thought expedient by the English, provided it be shown that a commercial intercourse with the Chinese people, free in its nature and without limit as to extent, may be established without delay, permanently, at little cost, without making a demand or even asking a favour of the trembling mandarins, and, lastly, without exciting any national jealousy. To show all this, is the object of what follows.

Sir Stamford Raffles founded the commercial station of Singapore, in the belief that the Chinese free traders would readily find their way to that port in their own ships. He was mistaken by above twenty degrees. Near twenty years' experience has shown that the distance between Singapore and the most commercial parts of the Chinese coast is much too great for junk navigation. But Raffles, who was a man, has pointed out the way to extend the free trade of China without diplomacy or war ; not only without further alarming the poor mandarins, but so that, with the extension of free trade, their present terrors should entirely subside. In order to give to the free trade of China its utmost possible development, the only thing wanted is a free marketplace ; a place to which Chinese dealers could easily resort, where foreign ships might lie undisturbed by wind or government, and where foreign-

ers might live in security ; a mere market-place, convenient for Chinese dealers, and out of the control of the Chinese government.

Along the whole coast of China there exist not less than a thousand islands, some of which possess all the requisites of a trading port ; good anchorage, shelter from all winds, and plenty of fresh water. There are more habitable islands near the coast of China, than along any other coast in the world of the same extent. But now observe another peculiarity : those islands are not subject to the government of the main land. Some of them are uninhabited ; some are inhabited by a few wretched fishermen who govern themselves ; and some by a race of pirates who make war against the Chinese government, occasionally putting a stop to the coasting trade, murdering great numbers of Chinese, levying tribute on the continent, and at times making peace with the mandarins on very advantageous terms. Some evidence on this point appears in a note below.* The emperor of China claims dominion

* “ The Lion continued thus several days working off the China shore, without gaining a mile. She then stood over for Formosa, where there was less current against her ; and she made some progress ; but the turbulence of the weather was such that she sprung both top-masts, and was obliged to return to the Ladrões, in order to be in some degree of shelter, for the purpose of being refitted, and capable of renewing her efforts to get forward. Several piratical vessels, filled with

in England, and makes his subjects believe that he receives tribute from that country; but in

Chinese, were hovering in this neighbourhood, and had very lately taken several Chinese junks, and plundered the adjacent islands. The practice of these pirates is to make slaves of such able-bodied men as they take prisoners, to put the rest to death, and to sink the junks, and burn the houses, after taking out whatever they deem valuable."—*Staunton's Embassy to China*, vol. ii. p. 521.

"During the time the pirates infested the coasts, numbers of salt junks were intercepted by them, and salt rose to an extravagant price. At length the Company were obliged to negotiate with the admiral of the pirates, and paid a certain sum for every vessel he furnished with a passport.

"After a while the captains and crews of the salt junks became leagued with the pirates, and used to convey to them, clandestinely, provisions, stores, ammunition, &c. The government detected the connivance, and laid an embargo, of a sudden, upon the returning salt junks. The pirate admiral, finding his supplies cut off, invaded the country about the inner passage leading to Macao, where he cut all the ripe rice, and carried it off, as well as a great number of women, whom he presented to his followers. His name was Apo-Tsy, a very formidable robber, who had an immense fleet of junks, and upwards of 20,000 men under his command. He at length became so daring, that he intercepted the boats carrying cargoes to the ships at Whampoa, and committed depredations on land within eighteen miles of Canton. The Viceroy became alarmed, for he had no army to oppose him, and was forced to employ an English armed country ship to drive him out of the river. Many naval engagements took place between the Chinese war ships and the pirates; but the latter invariably obtained the victory. The Portuguese at Macao were also called upon, or rather were told their offer would be accepted, to fit

fact, and in right too, his power is limited by the water's edge of the Chinese coast. At sea the pirates are his masters, and neither he nor his ancestors ever conquered the islands. Those islands, therefore, are open to be used by any body for any purpose. If one of the Ladrões or Pirate Isles, were turned into a market-place for the traders of all nations, the English and Chinese Honges, were they not *in extremis*, might complain that the vested rights of the pirates had

out ships against the pirates, and a sum of money would be granted to them by the Canton government. However, very little good resulted in the way of fighting; but the Portuguese rendered the Viceroy an essential service in the way of negotiation, as mediators between him and the pirates. Apo-Tsy positively refused to listen to the Viceroy's promise of an amnesty, should the pirates return to their allegiance, without the Macao government becoming security for the faithful performance of the contract. The Macao government therefore, came forward, and pledged itself to the admiral, who immediately submitted with all his followers. He was made governor of the province of Fokien, and his followers were all pardoned. During their wars with the Chinese, the pirates took a fleet, commanded by a thai-tuk, or admiral, who was uncle to the present emperor. Apo-Tsy had some dislike to the Chinese admiral; and when he took him, ordered him to be beheaded. The present emperor (Tao-Kuang,) on coming to the throne, sent the governor of Fokien a polite message to say, that the laws of China required blood for blood, and he therefore sent for his head instead of his uncle's. There was no excuse to be made, and Apo-Tsy's head was conveyed to Peking."—*Dobell, vol. ii. p. 153.*

been attacked ; but who else could find fault with the conversion of one of those robbers' nests to so excellent a use ?

Not the Chinese government, to whom the founders of the market-place would say :—You dread foreigners ; we keep out of your way. You forbid us to enter your ports, Canton excepted ; we withdraw from Canton. You tremble lest we should sow revolutionary principles amongst your people by residing with them ; henceforth there shall be no intercourse between them and us, save for the purpose of exchanging goods ; and that intercourse shall not take place within your dominions. Hitherto, between you and us there have been frequent quarrels ; but now all ground of dispute is gone ; we demand no rights, ask no favours. Well we know, that you cannot prevent your people from coming to us for trade in this our new, our own, market-place ; and sure we are that if you could do so, you would not ; because if you should do so, the present arrangement, which ought to relieve you of all anxiety, must be superseded by diplomacy, which would frighten you extremely, and in the end, probably, realize your worst fears. The step that we have taken was devised expressly for your comfort : tremble no more ; we bid you farewell for ever.

Nor could the Americans object to an English, any more than the English could object to an American trading station near the coast of China ;

provided that, in either case, the market-place were free, that is, open to all nations on perfectly equal terms. Why not so in an island used merely for trade, as well as on the main land, where, if the Chinese government permitted trade, they would, as far as they might be able, treat all the foreign traders alike? The English exclude the Americans from Singapore. It so happens that Jonathan suffers little by John Bull's meanness in this affair; Singapore being, I repeat, more than twenty degrees too far south for its intended purpose; but Jonathan has a right to his revenge, and may take it, overcoming evil with good, by establishing a Singapore in the proper place, for the use of the English as well as the Chinese and Americans. Concert between two nations whose origin, language and real interests are one, would be better still, and would not be difficult, if the English ministers, instead of being proud, lazy, selfish lords, were, like the American ministers, active men of business, liable to be removed for neglecting the public good.

If, however, this happy change should not occur in time, there are islands enough on the coast of China for all nations to chuse amongst, who may wish to establish a market-place for trade with the Chinese; and for two reasons it is very desirable that more than one such trading station should be established. Because, in the first place, the more numerous such stations, the

more easy would be the total suppression of piracy on the coast of China ; and secondly, because, if there were but one station, nearly opposite the mouth of the Canton river, such free trade as now takes place in that river, though it would go to that new market-place, would not be extended to the northern maritime provinces, where the greatest demand for foreign goods exists and where the principal exports of China are raised. To show how much would be saved by a direct trade with the northern maritime provinces, and how extensive such a trade would probably become, some conclusive evidence is given below.*

* The Dutch Ambassador and his suite, on their return from Peking in 1796, passed through what may be considered the richest and most populous provinces of China ; and Van der Braam's account of the journey abounds with information on the state of the maritime districts in the neighbourhood of the great Blue River, or Yang-tse Kiang, which rises in the mountains of Thibet and traverses the Chinese provinces of Setchuen, Konquang, and Kiang-nan ; and falls into the sea at no great distance from the mouth of the Hoang-Ho or Yellow River, the second river of China, and indeed of Asia. Van der Braam, one of the most phlegmatic of Dutchmen, described what he saw at the moment of seeing it, and without the least appearance of exaggeration : yet his journal, in that part of it which relates to the temperate maritime provinces, becomes a mere catalogue of villages, towns, cities, canals, aqueducts, bridges, and other signs of a dense, industrious, and wealthy population. Has the East India Company any trade with this part of China ? No direct trade whatever, and if some little indirect trade by means of internal carriage, still almost with-

One word touching the cost of establishing the most free, and perhaps most extensive, trade in

out being conscious of it. Considering that this is the heart of the Chinese empire, that the climate requires woollen cloths, which are a staple production of England, and that the entrances of two wide rivers would afford great facilities for conducting the unauthorised trade, this, beyond all comparison, appears to be the spot where the trading disposition of the Chinese people ought to be cultivated.

“Can you,” Mr. Marjoribanks is asked, “say whether the demand for English woollen manufacture in China is capable of being increased according to the increased supply?” and he answers—“I imagine that, if our manufactures could be introduced *into the northern provinces* of the empire, the demand for them would decidedly increase.”—“Are there any insuperable obstacles to the introduction of our woollens into the northern parts of China? The ports of China being hermetically sealed against us for many years?”—“What do you consider the impediments to a great extension of trade? The limits which the Chinese have set to the foreign trade; their confining it to one remote corner of one of the southern provinces of the empire. The articles which we import into China are carried to the northern provinces through the interior of the country.” * * * *

“The black tea imported by the East India Company is grown and manufactured in the province of Fokien, with the exception of about one-third of that sort called by us Bohea, which third part is produced in the north-eastern corner of the province of Canton. The green tea is all grown in the provinces of Kiang-nan, Kiang-si, and Che-kiang, but chiefly in the two former.”

Mr. Davies, like Mr. Marjoribanks, a servant of the Company, and of course a friend to the monopoly, says—“the tea trade would be more beneficial, because I conceive it would be larger,

the world. The reckless jobbing of those who managed the old English constitution, has, together with the uneasiness arising from low profits, led to such a passion for retrenchment that the new English government will probably be denied funds for many a useful purpose. But, in this case, no public funds are required. The harbour dues of Singapore (which is little more than a stopping place for English ships) the mere harbour dues of that ill-chosen and merely English port, are sufficient to defray the expense of maintaining it. The trade of a well-chosen marketplace on the coast of China, open to all nations

if it were near to the centre of the empire ; that very great accession to the prices of tea which arises from the long land-carriage would be avoided, if the trade were nearer to the tea provinces. * * * * *

“ With all that has been done, the facilities” (of internal carriage) “ are in a very inferior state to what they might be. The river which brings the téa to Canton from the frontier of the province, where it has to cross a high mountain, is a mere trout stream for a great portion of the way ; and foreigners of all descriptions have been obliged to wait for months at Canton, on account of there not being enough water in that river to float the vessels that bring the teas.”

On this head, more evidence of a conclusive nature might be brought forward ; but what has been given will satisfy most readers. Those who wish for further information on the subject, will find it in Van der Braam's work, in the accounts of Lord Macartney's and Lord Amherst's embassies, in Captain Hall's account of Loo Choo, and in the Parliamentary Reports.

on equal terms, must produce, from moderate harbour dues alone, more than enough to cover the cost of establishing and preserving it; supposing the work performed in the American fashion, with a view to utility, not in the old English fashion, with a view to robbing the public. Besides, referring to the preceding remarks on the causes of the value of land, to the value of land at Singapore, Penang and Batavia; a value produced mainly by the competition of Chinese settlers; and bearing in mind that as many Chinese as could find room would settle in a free market-place near the coast of China, it would seem that great profits might be made by an outlay of capital in the way proposed. The English are puzzled to find investments for their capital. But if their expiring Hong, should for the present forbid them to lay out money in this way, do not they lend money to the Americans? and who was it that lately negotiated a loan between English capitalists and the state of New Orleans? it was Joshua Bates, himself an American, chief of the first commercial firm in England, deeply engaged in American trade, and intimately acquainted with the trade of China. An Anglo-American Company could not, indeed, make money, by extending free trade to the whole coast of China, without the sanction of some government, without a flag and a charter. Penn, who made money even by planting a colony on the desert

coast of America, had a charter from his government, but beyond that piece of parchment no assistance. The present English ministers would not grant a charter for the purpose in question, which they would dislike as a dangerous example of cheapness, without patronage, in the management of great public undertakings. They would prefer a costly embassy to Pekin. Lord Amherst's pocket money, forming part of the great sum expended on the last embassy, was 40,000*l.*; more than six times the yearly pay of his American majesty. The English ministers, then, would spurn at a proposal for effecting a public object with private funds; that is carefully, cheaply, without patronage, as they lately refused a charter to some of the best men in England who wished to employ private funds in founding a Pennsylvania on the south coast of New Holland. But their time is nearly up; all the usefulness that was in them having been got out of them. Meanwhile, before their successors shall be named by the new ruling order, striped bunting would do as well as the union jack; and an Anglo-American Company, willing to speculate on the establishment of market-places for free trade with the Chinese, would not be rebuffed at Washington.

At Washington, New York, Boston, Baltimore, or Philadelphia, what follows may be read with interest.

Questions submitted to Mr. Aken, with his
answers.*

1. What have been your means of becoming acquainted with the foreign trade of China?—I commanded the ship *Exmouth* of 725 tons from Calcutta, and visited China under a license from the East India Company in 1817, and spent four months in the Canton river. In the following year I again visited China in the same ship, and again spent four months in the Canton river. In 1819 I made a similar voyage. On all these occasions the whole of a mixed cargo, worth as much as 60,000*l*, was consigned to myself; and I had the entire disposal of it, as well as the charge of reloading the ship, acting as captain and supercargo.

2. What do you conceive would be the effect on the unauthorised trade, of establishing insular commercial stations near the coast, and in the most favourable situations?—The effect would be, that the Chinese would very readily enter into all your views of trade. *Great numbers of Chinese would settle themselves in such stations, in order to conduct trade. They would enter*

* Mr. Aken resides in London. Great part of his life has been spent at sea: there are but few coasts in the world that he has not visited; and his character as a navigator is established by the work of Captain Flinders, who appointed him master of the Investigator discovery ship.

heart and soul into the spirit of a free trade, which nothing could prevent them from establishing. They have all kinds of craft along shore, the junks being from 20 to 500 tons; and they would come with their vessels to the commercial stations, bringing with them Chinese products to be exchanged for European and other products. The government has no power to prevent the people from trading even in the Canton river, and could not by any means interfere with a trade carried on at a short distance from the main. My opinion of establishing such stations for trade is, that it would be most advantageous, and would cause a very great increase of the foreign trade of China; but it would destroy the trade of the Hong merchants, and of the East India Company also, if Englishmen were not prevented from trading at the stations.

3. What in your opinion are the most proper places for such stations? On this point be so good as to furnish any information that you may think calculated to be of use.—On account of the unskilfulness of the Chinese as sailors it would be advisable to have more than one station, in order to keep up a trade with a great extent of coast. Suppose you had several stations; I would begin with one island, called *Pulo Condore*, in latitude about 8 deg. North, almost within sight of the coast of Cambodia; which island was settled by the English 130 years ago; but they

were cut off by the Macassar soldiers whom they employed. I have been close to this island and all round it. It is inhabited by a few fishermen. The anchorage and shelter are good; and I was assured by the people who came from the island to my ship, that there was plenty of good water there. The next situation would be one of the Great Ladrões, or Pirate Isles, near the mouth of the Canton river; and the best of these islands appear to me to be Neong-kong-oa, where there is good anchorage for a great number of ships, and plenty of water. This island, on the north side of the great Lema Channel, used to be inhabited by pirates of the most ferocious character. The Chinese government could not prevent a settlement from being formed there, nor interfere with the settlers afterwards. Another place for a station, at which a great trade would soon spring up, is one of the numerous islands in the neighbourhood of Amoy, in latitude 24 deg. North. I have not visited this part of the coast; but from such charts as we have, and what I have heard from those who have sailed further north than Canton, I have not any doubt that several islands, well suited for the purpose, would be found in the neighbourhood of Amoy. The most important place for a station is still further north, near the mouths of the great rivers; but of this part of the coast I know only that it has many islands; as may be said of the whole coast

of China, which is more studded with islands than any other coast in the world.

“ Cette île, (Formosa) quoique située vis à vis la province de Fokien, et à trente lieues de la côte, n'était pas soumise à l'empire de la Chine, qui n'a point la passion des conquêtes, et qui par une politique inhumaine et mal entendue, aime mieux laisser périr une partie de sa population que d'envoyer la surabondance de ses sujets dans des terres voisines. On trouva que Formose avait cent trente ou cent quarante lieues de tour. Ses habitants, à en juger par leurs mœurs et par leur figure, paraissaient descendus des Tartares de la partie la plus septentrionale de l'Asie. Vraisemblablement la Corée leur avait servi de chemin. Ils vivaient, la plupart, de pêche ou de chasse et allaient presque nus. Les Hollandais, après avoir pris sans obstacle toutes les lumières que la prudence exigeant, jugèrent que le lieu le plus favorable pour un établissement étoit une *petite île* voisine de la grande. Ils trouvaient dans cette situation trois avantages considérables ; une défense aisée, si la haine ou la jalousie cherchaient à les troubler ; un port formé par les deux îles ; la facilité d'avoir dans toutes les moussons *une communication sûre avec la Chine*. La nouvelle colonie se fortifiait insensiblement sans éclat, lorsqu'elle *s'éleva tout d'un coup à une*

*prospérité qui étonna toute l'Asie. Ce fut à la conquête de la Chine par les Tartares qu'elle dut ce bonheur inespéré : ainsi les torrens engraisent les vallons de la substance des montagnes ravagées. Plus de cent mille Chinois, qui ne voulaient pas se soumettre au vainqueur, se réfugièrent à Formose. Ils y portèrent l'activité qui leur est particulière, la culture du riz et du sucre, et y attirèrent des vaisseaux sans nombre de leur nation. Bientôt l'île devint le centre de toutes les liaisons que Java, Siam, les Philippines, la Chine, le Japon, et d'autres contrées voulurent former. EN PEU D'ANNÉES ELLE SE TROUVA LE PLUS GRAND MARCHÉ DE L'INDE."**

* The Abbé Raynal's Philosophical and Political History of the Establishments and Commerce of Europeans in the two Indies. Vol. i. p. 286. Paris Edition of Amable Costes & Co.

NOTE IX.

SOME SOCIAL PECULIARITIES OF THE AMERICANS.

Peculiar state of religion—causes of superstition without bigotry or fanaticism—inquisitiveness—rudeness of the backwoodsman—bigotry in patriotism—neglect of learning.

MOST English travellers in America hurt their credit for veracity by describing instances of the most violent religious phrenzy. In England, many people do not believe Mrs. Trollope's story of the "anxious benches": I do, not doubting either, but satisfied, that throughout the less populous parts of the union people often meet for the express purpose of working themselves into a state of superstitious madness. To overrate the crazy doings of a camp-meeting in the back woods would be impossible. Bodies writhing, arms swinging, legs dancing, eyes rolling; groans, shouts, howls and shrieks; men knocking their own heads against trees, and women tearing the clothes off each other's backs; the congregation frantic with fear of the devil and the preacher drunk with his own gibberish; it is all true, and of common occurrence. Captain Hall would say, it arises from the want of a spending class to set

an example of decorum in public worship ; or from the want of loyalty, to which he attributes so many of Jonathan's peculiarities. Mrs. Trollope would have the English believe, that superstition in America is owing to democratic government. Some, again, find a cause for it in the want of a state religion ; adopting the notion of David Hume, and supposing that " each ghostly practitioner, depending for subsistence on the liberality of individuals continually endeavours by some novelty to excite the languid devotion of his audience, without regard to truth, morals or decency in the doctrines inculcated ; and that thus every tenet is adopted that best suits the disorderly affections of the human frame, customers being drawn to each conventicle by new industry and address in practicing on the passions and credulity of the populace." Another set of Englishmen who, in their abstract love of democracy, cannot bear to be told that some things in America might be mended ; haters of church establishments, too, who therefore disagree with David Hume ; these, when asked to account for the excesses of love feasts and camp meetings, lay all the blame on the oppressors of those puritans who colonized New England, concluding that the fanaticism which arose from persecution has been handed down to living Americans and spread over the union by emigration from the New England states. The doctrines of Mrs. Trollope and

Captain Hall are not worth, the others will not bear, examination.

Hume's argument in favour of church establishment supposes the existence of a "populace," liable from their profound ignorance to be deluded by needy speculators in religion. But there is no populace in America; and those congregations, whether under roofs or in the forest, which most resemble the inmates of a mad-house are composed of people whose knowledge goes beyond reading and writing; shrewd, worldly-minded, calculating, industrious, buyers and sellers, and what is more, politicians represented in a local parliament and in congress, who make the laws which they have to obey; laws which, measured by the rule of utility, show more practical wisdom in the makers than the "greatest statesmen" of Europe can pretend to. On the other hand, the spirit of puritanism is extinct in America. The founders of New England, as their hot zeal arose from persecution, so were they, always excepting the quakers, persecutors in their turn, more cruel than the oppressors from whom they had fled; and far more bigoted, since they persecuted as they had suffered for religion's sake, while the churchmen who had hunted them out of England were moved by a spirit altogether worldly. But that bitter, that most vindictive religious zeal, which dictated the first laws of the New England colonies, is now unknown in Ame-

rica. The *odium theologicum* did not descend to the grand children of the puritans. Scenes have been lately acted at Exeter Hall, in London, exhibitions of furious religious bigotry, such as it would be impossible to get up in America ; where all sects are tolerant, and not one takes half so much pains to make proselytes as several sects in England. Of the many religions that flourish in America one only, of course, can be true ; yet is there no one sect, which zealously declares all the others in the wrong. In things spiritual, as there is neither favor nor persecution from the government, so bigotry and fanaticism, in the English sense of those words, have perished. In order to describe the peculiar state of religion in America one must use words not commonly applied to the subject.

The Americans, speaking generally, are religious by habit, but not constantly, not mixing up things spiritual with things temporal, not showing, I had almost said not feeling, religious sentiments, except when they meet for public worship. The custom of attending public worship is almost universal ; and to neglect it would be considered indecent ; but so completely has custom taken the place of zeal in this matter, that what form of worship a citizen prefers is perfectly indifferent to all the other citizens, like the colour of his coat. Members of the same family, even, belong to congregations of opposite tenets without the

slightest interruption of domestic peace. Moreover, avowed deists, who in England would be scouted as infidels, are as much respected as the most devout Christians, provided they belong to a sect and congregate once a week to profess their limited faith. Lukewarmness, indifference, this would be called in England, and has been called by English writers; but some other expression must be found for it, since amongst the most tolerant congregations in America are those which occasionally work themselves into a state of religious phrenzy. Sobriety in general, with occasional fits of intoxication, seems a more correct description of spiritual matters in America. The general sobriety is explained by a total separation between religion and politics; but this does not account for the occasional drunkenness. What is the cause of that religious phrenzy now and then exhibited by people, whose ordinary religious feelings are so tolerant and sober, so much the reverse of bigotry and fanaticism?

The terms of the question point to an answer which explains this curious moral phenomenon. Violent occasional excitement of the mind appears to be a physical want with those, whose ordinary condition either does not require or prevents much mental exertion. None take such delight in getting drunk with spirits, as the savage whose monotonous life keeps his mental faculties in a state of torpor. Rum in America,

whisky in Ireland, gin at present in England, opium in Turkey and China, and tobacco in Spain, are substitutes for moral stimulants. But where in the wide world shall be found any considerable number of people, whose minds are not actively employed by their common pursuits, and who yet forego the use of extraordinary stimulants? No where. The rule is universal, including those savages, who for want of spirits, drugs, music, shows, romances and idols, are said to intoxicate themselves by twirling round till they fall. The kinds of mental stimulants which it seems in man's nature to require, differ with the infinite variety of men's circumstances. The spirits of a water drinker are raised by one glass of wine, drank without company; while an habitual wine drinker is not elated by a dozen glasses, nor by two dozen unless there be others to drink with him. The solitary prisoner is exhilarated by obtaining a single companion, drunk, he knows not why, when he returns to society; while on him who enjoys social intercourse every day, it has no unusual effect. There would be no end of examples to show that different circumstances or states of mind produce a craving for mental stimulants very different in kind and degree; that in this case, as in so many more, what is one man's meat is another man's poison.

Now the dispersed inhabitants of America, and in particular of those new settlements where love-

feasts and camp meetings are most common, pass a great part of their lives in solitude; not in absolute solitude, like that which when inflicted as a punishment produces death or insanity, but out of the way of social intercourse, each family being isolated from all the others, except on rare occasions, when they congregate in spite of distance and bad roads. The effect on the mind of this lonely and monotonous existence, can hardly be conceived by Englishmen generally, to whom the stillness of the country gives fresh and pleasant feelings. To a lone American family, there is nothing so delightful as one of those occasions when many families meet for any purpose; and when thousands meet for a religious purpose, the congregation, excited by a total change of scene, by the unusual confluence of numbers, and by the novelty of an impulse common to many, are easily intoxicated by eloquence of which the object is to inflame their already heated imaginations. The preacher may or may not be as sincere as his audience; but in either case he is not to be blamed for their extravagance. Instead of causing the phrenzy over which he presides, he only helps to gratify a desire, the desire for some violent mental excitement, which has resulted from sameness and solitude. A wandering preacher in America does not create, but only supplies, a demand for his services; visiting thinly peopled districts, not with a view to delude the scattered

inhabitants, but because he knows that they already long for his presence, that they are waiting for a dose of superstitious terror ; and that if he should not help them to devil-worship, they would send for some other dealer in that, to them, intoxicating drug.

It has been remarked, that on these occasions of self-sought delirium, the women are wilder than the men. And this might have been expected ; because as almost every where women lead a more lonely and monotonous life than men, they are more susceptible of excitement from novelty and crowds. They are so especially in the back settlements of America, where travelling, if not dangerous, requires energy and bodily strength, not to mention how much time. In such spots, men pass weeks together without exchanging two ideas ; women, months, or even years, without forming one. If the men did not attend markets, fairs and elections, they would probably be as wild as the women at love feasts and camp meetings. The peculiar extravagance of the women on such occasions, helps to account for the extravagance of both sexes ; and this view of the subject is confirmed by reflecting that they who compose the wildest congregations of America, when they return home after a fit of superstitious intoxication, are as diligent as ever in their ordinary pursuits, more contented than before, and, touching religion, not less tolerant

and sober, not a whit less different from English bigots and fanatics.*

It would be a great mistake to suppose that obstacles to social intercourse are confined to the newest settlements. When the states were colonies, waste land was usually given away by their governments, often in vast tracts to per-

* Mr. Flint in his *Geography and History of the Western States*, after showing the utility of camp meetings, writes :—
 “ Nine tenths of the religious instruction of the country, is given by people who itinerate, and who are, with very few exceptions, notwithstanding all that has been said to the contrary, men of great zeal and sanctity. These earnest men, who have little to expect from pecuniary support, and less from the prescribed reverence and influence, which can only appertain to a stated ministry, find at once that every thing depends on the cultivation of popular talents. Zeal for the great cause, mixed imperceptibly with a spice of earthly ambition, and the latent emulation and pride of our nature, and other motives which unconsciously influence, more or less, the most sincere and the most disinterested—the desire of distinction among their contemporaries and their brethren—and a reaching struggle for the fascination of popularity, goad them on to study all the means and arts of winning the people. Travelling from month to month through dark forests, with such ample time and range for deep thought, as they amble slowly on horseback through their perigrations, the men naturally acquire a pensive and romantic turn of thought and expression, such as we think favourable to eloquence. Hence the preaching is of a highly popular cast, and its first aim is to *excite the feelings*. Hence too, *EXCITEMENTS*, or in religious parlance, ‘*awakenings*,’ are common in all this region.” *Quoted by Stuart, vol. 2, page 456.*

sons who had no means of cultivating them, and who, therefore, either left the land in a desert state, or disposed of it to others at so very cheap a rate that individuals readily obtained more land than they could possibly cultivate. In either case, the dispersion of the people was very great ; for either the desert, wanting roads, was a bar to intercourse amongst the people who surrounded it, or each settler fixed on it was, still by want of roads, separated from all the other settlers. But since the government of the United States has, generally, instead of giving away new land, sold it by auction to the highest bidder above a fixed minimum price, some new states which offered peculiar attractions, have been more densely or rather less thinly peopled than some of the old colonies, and far better provided with roads, which are more easily made in proportion as they are less wanted, that is, in proportion as the people are less dispersed. Still, above two-thirds of the inhabitants of America pass the greater part of their lives in comparative loneliness ; in a state which, if it could be imagined by hill squires in Wales, even they would call unbearable solitude. It is a state of existence not readily imagined by any Englishman, quite incomprehensible by those who have always lived in towns ; but the Englishman, who shall conceive what it is, will be at no loss to account for many American habits and customs, besides that

peculiar kind of superstition which displeases English travellers.

The officers of Captain Parry's second voyage, after being cut off from the world for more than two years, landed on one of the Shetland islands, and were invited to dine with a party of the inhabitants. At this meeting, I have been told, questions and answers formed the whole conversation; the voyagers, though craving for news, being obliged to gratify the habitual inquisitiveness of those secluded islanders. In like manner, the curiosity of Americans is not a vulgar trick, nor, as some will have it, a fruit of democratic government, but a result, natural and inevitable, of a faulty mode of colonization, in which no thought was ever taken to keep a due proportion between people and land.*

*The American of the backwoods has often been described to the English as grossly ignorant, dirty, unsocial, delighting in rum and tobacco, attached to nothing but his rifle, adventurous, restless, more than half savage. Deprived of social enjoyments, or excitements, he has recourse to those of savage life, and becomes (for in this respect the Americans degenerate) unfit

* "I found them very inquisitive; far more so than any of the New Englanders I have ever met with; but I afterwards learned that these people had *lately come from a remote part of the country, where, probably, there were no schools.*" *Stuart, vol. 2, page 345.*

for society. As the evils of society, misery and vice produced by misery, are unknown in America, as they would have been quite as well avoided with a greater concentration of the people; as, indeed, the produce of American industry might have been greater if the people had been less dispersed, the semi-barbarism of American backwoodsmen is an unnecessary evil; and an evil, too, without the least countervailing advantage; but, though caused without a motive, still it has been caused by all the governments which have disposed of new land in America, from that of Queen Elizabeth, which bestowed twenty-five millions of acres upon an individual, to that of President Jackson, which sells new land at the very low price of five shillings per acre.

Americans are accused of presumption, conceit and gross national vanity. Allowing for exceptions in the more populous parts of the union, and especially in the great sea-port towns, the people of America may, in this respect, be likened to the Tartar conquerors of China, who, being themselves barbarous, consider all but themselves barbarians. The least civilized Americans, those in a word who despise the old country, make up, like the Chinese mandarins, for want of bigotry in religion, by excessive bigotry in their patriotism. Some Creoles of New South Wales visiting England, thought London a miserable place when compared with Sydney. The settlers of

New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, adjoining colonies, planted by the same people, in the same way, and nearly at the same time, cannot bear, if we may judge by their books and newspapers, any comparison between the two very similar sheep-walks, which does not represent one as greatly superior to the other, according to which set of colonists may be addressed. Nearly all colonists, it is remarked, or at least nearly all people born in dispersed colonies, are fanatically proud of their own wild country and love to disparage the rest of the world. This narrowness of mind, arising from ignorance, seems proper to the barbarous conquerors of China; but, in colonies planted by the most civilized nations, it is a degenerate sentiment, a step backwards from civilization to barbarism, and out of the course of nature, which seems favourable, stoppages reckoned, to the improvement of mankind. In such cases, the ignorance which promotes conceit and mean pride, is a result of dispersion; the original cause of it in America being, not democracy, Captain Hall, but the low price of new land.

But the Captain Halls of England, when they contend that democracy produces neglect of learning in America, make out a case which has some show of truth. The memory of Franklin, say they, honored in Europe, is despised in America, save by a few whose eccentricity goes to

prove the rule. Subject colonies produced scholars and philosophers ; the democratic union depends on England for literature, or rather for a supply of novels, the only books suited to the American market. In all the United States, there is not an observatory ; Copley and West could not live in America ; Cooper and Irving publish in Europe. Amongst nations called civilized the Americans are the most neglectful of fine arts, science and philosophy ; and in America the cultivation of learning has fallen off with the progress of democracy. Therefore, in America, democracy is unfavourable to the cultivation of learning.

This statement of facts is true ;* and the conclusion appears true to many in England, because English travellers in the United States have carefully shut their eyes to a circumstance by which they might have accounted for most of the social peculiarities of America. Democracy, that is, po-

* Men of science, too, and of literature, not a small body in England, will find but few persons in the United States not engaged in professional business, and have not, in that country, the means of resorting to great public libraries, which they find in England indispensable for their pursuits. They find but few people *disposed to sympathise with them in the objects which interest them*. The United States do not offer a desirable asylum for persons of this description, even if they are in straightened circumstances. It will be much more for their happiness to contract their style of living in England than to make a voyage to America." *Stuart vol. 2, page 427.*

litical equality, which lays open to all alike every career of ambition, and makes usefulness the standard of merit, must surely be very favourable to the cultivation of learning; more especially when accompanied, as it is in the United States, by universal ease, which bestows leisure upon all. The Americans are the only people in the world blessed with leisure and equality. If political equality should be established in England, together with high profits and wages, who can doubt that the English would advance rapidly in every department of knowledge. Why then have the Americans degenerated in this respect? why do they set a lower value on knowledge than the colonists of Franklin's time?

"Though," says Adam Smith "in a rude state of society there is a good deal of variety in the occupations of every individual, there is not a great deal in those of the whole society. Every man does or is capable of doing almost every thing which any other man does or is capable of doing. Every man has a considerable degree of knowledge, ingenuity and invention, but scarce any man has a great degree. The degree, however, which is commonly possessed is generally sufficient for conducting the whole simple business of society. In a civilized state, on the contrary, though there is little variety in the occupations of the greater part of individuals, there is an almost infinite variety in those of the whole

society. These varied occupations present an almost infinite variety of objects to the contemplation of those few, who, being attached to no particular occupation themselves, have leisure and inclination to examine the occupations of other people. The contemplation of so great a variety of objects necessarily exercises their minds in endless comparisons and combinations and renders their understandings in an extraordinary degree both acute and comprehensive." But rudeness and civilization are effects as well as causes. By going further back, by substituting *dispersed* for *rude* and *concentrated* for *civilized*, we get nearer, at least, to the truth. In the history of the world, there is no example of a society at once dispersed and highly civilized; while there are instances without end, in the history of colonization, of societies, which, being civilized, became barbarous as soon as they were dispersed over an extensive territory. That division of each man's labour amongst several employments, which, says Adam Smith, is the immediate cause of ignorance, is an effect of dispersion; and dispersion interferes with the cultivation of knowledge in another way; that is, by obstacles to social intercourse, to the interchange of ideas, to the exercise of the mental faculties. By adding to this consideration one fact, the difficulty may be solved.

The citizens of the United States are a more

dispersed society than the colonists of Franklin's time. When Jefferson wrote the declaration of independence, the vast regions west of the Alleghanies had scarcely been opened for settlement. Washington became a soldier in contests with the Indians on the western frontier of Virginia, which is now the eastern frontier of states more extensive than the dependent colonies. Even if the increase of people had been equal to the acquisition of land, still the dispersion would have been greater, because the interior settlements are, by reason of their great distance from the sea, more deficient in natural means of communication. Washington often foretold some of the evils that would result from spreading towards the west, unless the eastern and western states were connected by canals and good roads. His warning was neglected until lately, when the eastern states became alarmed at the amount of emigration to the west. In those eastern states, the dependent colonies that were, they talk now of Washington's inspiration, and are most anxious to establish means of intercourse with the western settlements: they will find it difficult to remedy their own error. The western wilderness was theirs and liable to be treated in the way most for their advantage. They thought only of gratifying their national vanity, by extending as much as possible the surface of the union. Not content with promoting emigration to the wilderness,

when their own population was so scanty that they ought rather to have encouraged immigration from Europe, they sent to Europe for the purpose of acquiring more wilderness, and in one case actually paid hard money for an accession of mischief.* The result is, that population has spread, not merely as fast as it has increased, but faster; that there are fewer people to the square mile than when population was about a quarter of its present amount; and that this smaller number of people in proportion to land, besides being separated from each other by greater distance, are not so well provided with the means of social intercourse. Where there are markets, there the people live together; but these are few and far between. What the Americans would probably have been without markets, and to what they are indebted for the existence of markets, is shown in the following notes.

* "The acquisition by the United States in 1803, of the territories belonging to France in North America, including New Orleans, Louisiana and the Mississippi, was a most important one. The negotiations resulted in the cession of the French territory in North America, *exceeding in extent the whole land then belonging to the United States*, for sixty millions of francs." *Stuart, vol. 2, p. 227.*

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